

# FURBEARER PROGRAM

## STATEWIDE HARVEST & MANAGEMENT REPORT 2008-09

MONTANA



## **FURBEARER PROGRAM**

### **2008-09 STATEWIDE HARVEST AND MANAGEMENT REPORT**

PERIOD COVERED: July 1994 – June 2009

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DATE: June 10, 2009

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## **Program Goals**

- 1) To maintain well-distributed and healthy furbearer populations and associated habitats.
- 2) To provide ecological, recreational, cultural, educational, economic, and scientific benefits of the state's furbearers through sound resource management.
- 3) To address the social impacts of furbearers on human health, private property, and agricultural values.

## **Statewide Objectives**

- 1) Monitor population trends and the distribution of each furbearer species.
- 2) Maintain Montana's viable populations of each species through the conservation and enhancement of furbearer habitats.
- 3) Address the interest by resident publics for consumptive and non-consumptive uses of the state's furbearer resource.
- 4) Optimize recreational harvest opportunities through a sustained use management approach under regulatory protections.
- 5) Minimize animal damage and/or nuisance wildlife problems utilizing Department policies and management practices.
- 6) Promote trapping practices that minimize the take of non-target species and the humane harvest of furbearers.
- 7) Develop a public understanding and acceptance of the basis for the consumptive use of furbearers.

## **Management Strategies**

- 1) Identify and associate species distribution and population trends with delineated habitats.
- 2) Investigate species population trend through species/habitat surveys, species occurrence reports, harvest data, and research information.
- 3) Utilize regulatory mechanisms to provide trapper/hunter participation, harvest data, and biological information.
- 4) Include furbearers in land management decisions.



## Harvest and Management Activities

- 1) Population information and harvest data are collected by county and/or trapping district and reported by trapping district and statewide in this report. This method is intended to more closely describe the association between species diversity, distribution, and abundance with identified ecosystems and to use reconcilable legal units in the state. Furbearer species with harvest seasons are beaver, otter, muskrat, mink, marten, fisher, wolverine, and bobcat. Furbearers with closed season are lynx and swift fox and are not included in this report. Weasel, skunk and coyotes are state classified predators and fox, raccoon, and badger are non game species which are included in this report.
- 2) The annual harvest of otter, marten, fisher, wolverine and bobcat is monitored through a statewide pelt tagging and harvest registration system. Registration is initiated under 24-hour mandatory reporting through an automated system called the Mandatory Reporting Response Entry (MRRE) system. All tag sealing and completion of species registration forms are conducted by FWP personnel. Marten, fisher, and wolverine pelts are tagged under the authority of the state while otter and bobcat are tagged under mandate by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to meet federal CITES pelt export requirements.
- 3) Harvest data on the three remaining furbearers (beaver, muskrat, mink) and six fur-producing mammals (weasel, skunk, coyote, fox, raccoon, badger) was collected through a trapper harvest survey questionnaire. In addition, the same harvest data is collected on the five tagged/registered furbearers through the same survey questionnaire to specifically measure trapper effort and catch rates. Trapper effort will be used in developing long-term species population trend indices. The trapping and fur harvest survey was mailed to all resident and nonresident license holders. No reminder was sent to non-respondents. Expanded estimates of furbearer trapping, hunting, and harvest activities were made from the returned sample. The survey requests information on the estimated number of species harvested by county and trapping district, harvest method, and harvest effort. Summary harvest statistics and calculated catch rates were generated by a software package through FWP's Research & Technical Services Unit.
- 4) Mandatory carcass collections are required for otter, fisher and wolverine and skulls must be surrendered from harvested bobcat. Marten skulls were not required to be turned in during the 2008-09 season but have been in prior years. All carcasses and skulls are forwarded to FWP's Wildlife Laboratory in Bozeman for biological analysis to determine specimen age, sex, body condition, food habits, reproductive history, and to collect tissue samples.
- 5) A Montana fur dealer survey conducted by the statewide furbearer coordinator has been replaced by checking the North American Fur Auction (NAFA) website after the spring sale in order to obtain average pelt values for each fur-producing species. An increasing number of trappers are shipping directly to NAFA. This information can be used to calculate economic fur value of each species as a predictor of harvest pressure (i.e. higher prices = greater harvest pressure).
- 6) Annual winter furbearer snow track surveys are conducted by biologists following standardized survey protocol and track identification methods (Zielinski and Kucera 1994,

Halfpenny 1994) in Trapping Districts 1-4 (NW and SW montane forest habitats). The numbers of track detections were recorded along selected routes for furbearers, which include marten, fisher, wolverine, lynx, bobcat; prey species such as snowshoe hare and pine squirrel; and lion, weasel and coyote. Standardized forms are used to record species track detections and track identification measurements.

Snow track surveys are utilized to determine: a) species occurrence/distribution, b) population trend from long-term track detection rates, and c) relative species abundance. A prey index of snowshoe hare numbers is used to predict furbearer population fluctuations and annual recruitment of several furbearer species. This is a continuing activity to further develop route design, survey and track detection methodology, and to further investigate population trend analysis and density estimate techniques.

- 7) Biologists in trapping districts 4-7 are in the process of developing lagomorph prey indices through the use of headlight surveys. The numbers of lagomorphs are counted on established routes three times each survey period. This index to prey availability is utilized to predict bobcat population fluctuations by anticipating changes in annual rabbit production (March surveys) or recruitment levels (September surveys).
- 8) Department furbearer occurrence/distribution report forms are distributed and collected annually. Reports are completed only by Department personnel from verified reports or personal observations. Accumulated reports provide species occurrence data to assist in delineating statewide and trapping district distribution of selected furbearer species (otter, fisher, wolverine, lynx and swift fox).
- 9) Furbearer research is an ongoing statewide activity that is utilized to address management related issues on a species-specific basis when funding is available. Several furbearer program sponsored field research projects were conducted during the report period and external research projects were also conducted during this time.

## **Statewide Harvest and Management Results**

Harvest and management results were analyzed by county and trapping district and reported as a statewide summary. The seven legally defined trapping districts (TD) and 56 counties are shown in Fig. 1.

### License Sales

Statewide trapping license sales have increased by over 53% between 1994-95 and 2008-09 (Fig. 2). The 4,677 licenses purchased during 2008-09 season also represent an increase of 5% over the 4,463 sold the previous year. License purchases at the seven regional offices and the Helena headquarters are somewhat mixed each year. In 2008-09 three regional offices had increased sales from the previous year (3,4,5,) and the Helena headquarters of 23% while decreases occurred at four of the regional offices (1,2,6,7) (Table 1). Internet sales likely account for the increase in Helena HQ purchases. Again, a general upward trend in statewide license sales is apparently continuing through 2008-09 from the lowest number of 1,736 licenses sold in 1990-91.

## Annual Harvest Summary

Montana's furbearer harvest for the 2008-09 season is presented in Tables 2. A 10-year harvest summary for years that species harvest data is available is presented in Table 3. These figures represent the known legal harvest of registered furbearer species and an estimated harvest of the remaining species based on the trapper questionnaire. Detailed harvest statistic estimates by species, trapping district and county are available in the Trapping and Fur Harvest Reports (Gude, pers. comm.). During the most recent year available, trapper survey questionnaires were returned from 34% of the 4,677 people who purchased a trapper's license during the 2008-09 furbearer season. The total number of animals reported being taken during the 2008-09 season decreased by 9% over the 2007-08 season (Table 3). This decrease may be the result of weather conditions and generally stable to declining populations of several furbearing animal species in some portions of the state.

## Pelt Prices

Although pelt prices remained relatively stable during the 2008-09 season, several species demonstrated large decreases in value, particularly marten, fisher, bobcat and badger (Table 4). The most significant decreases in harvest numbers were reported for mink, marten, and coyote with a slight increase in harvest of muskrat and bobcat, despite lower prices from the previous year.

## Species Harvest Summary

Statewide species harvest trends by trapping districts and statewide are presented in the Species Harvest Summary section (pages 17 to 60). The statewide harvest of most species was generally stable to declining with small increases in muskrat from 2007-08 and an increase that has continued in bobcat numbers over the past several years. These changes are variable, however, among the seven trapping districts. Harvest numbers may correspond to species abundance within each habitat base, although other variables, such as trapper effort and catch rate, may be more useful indicators to correlate harvest data with population trends. Under this assumption, there are specific implications for habitat and species management opportunities.

## Population Monitoring

Results calculated from the trapper survey questionnaire that report trapper effort for all species, including the known registered species harvest provided Catch Per Unit Effort ( $CPUE = \# \text{ animals harvested} / 1,000 \text{ trap days}$ ), are used to help monitor population trends (Species Harvest Summary pages 17 to 60). Using Catch Rates (trap days/catch) from the annual harvest survey will be evaluated during the next report period. These variables will be examined further to determine how well they may reflect species population trends. Graphs of the CPUE for species groups to compare trends are presented on pages 55 and 56 in the Species Harvest Summary section.

Results of carcass collections from otter, fisher and wolverine, and skull turn-in from bobcat and marten are shown under each of these species sections in the Species Harvest Summary (pages 17 to 60). These graphs illustrate the biological parameters collected and reported which are juvenile/adult female ratio, age structure, sex ratio, and median age of the harvest sample. Not all years or most recent years may be available for age data, as processing adult teeth can take 1-2 years for results. Fisher and wolverine sample sizes are small so they do not necessarily

represent population trend. Marten skull collections were discontinued beginning with the 2008-09 season. Species information from wildlife laboratory analysis will be reported as it becomes available in future reports.

The statewide results from annual snow track surveys conducted in Trapping Districts 1-4, which were initiated in 1990-91, are presented as the most recent 10-year summary in Table 19. Numbers reported indicate total track detections recorded for prey species, selected furbearers and several predators from combined route data. The corresponding indices of track detection rates per 100 miles traveled are provided in Table 20. Long-term trends in species detection rates may indicate changes in relative abundance. Statewide species track detection rates graphed as an index of abundance are presented in Figures 55 to 58. Statewide results for 2008-09 indicate track detection rates increased slightly for snowshoe hare from the previous year but remained below the long-term average. There was also an increase in pine squirrels for this period. An increase in marten and bobcat detection rates in 2008-09 bring detection rates nearer to the 10-year average. Both fisher and wolverine detection rates in 2008-09 were above the 10-year average of 0.7 and 2.9, respectively. However, detection rates for lynx declined with lion about average.

The number of FWP occurrence/distribution reports received showed a consistent trend during the past several years with the majority of reports collected for wolverine and swift fox. These reports need to be entered in a locational referenced database, similar to the furbearer harvest database that provides species distribution data. The number of reported counties for swift fox observations continues to increase.

### Furbearer Research

Statewide furbearer research activities generated two MS theses since 1994. A swift fox ecology study in northcentral Montana from 1996-98 (Zimmerman 1998) and an evaluation of fisher reintroduction in northwestern Montana that included a broader statewide status review was completed in 2003 (Vinkey 2003). Several external research projects were supported in part by furbearer program funding and/or logistical support. These included a lynx study in the Seeley Lake area, a wolverine project in southwestern Montana and another wolverine study in Glacier National Park. A number of swift fox survey efforts were conducted between 1999 and 2007 and two separate international swift fox censuses with Canada occurred during 2000-01 and 2005-06 that were somewhat research-oriented and led to a population viability analysis and habitat assessment (Moehrenschrager et al. 2006). A bibliography of all furbearer program related research is listed on pages 62 to 68 in this report.

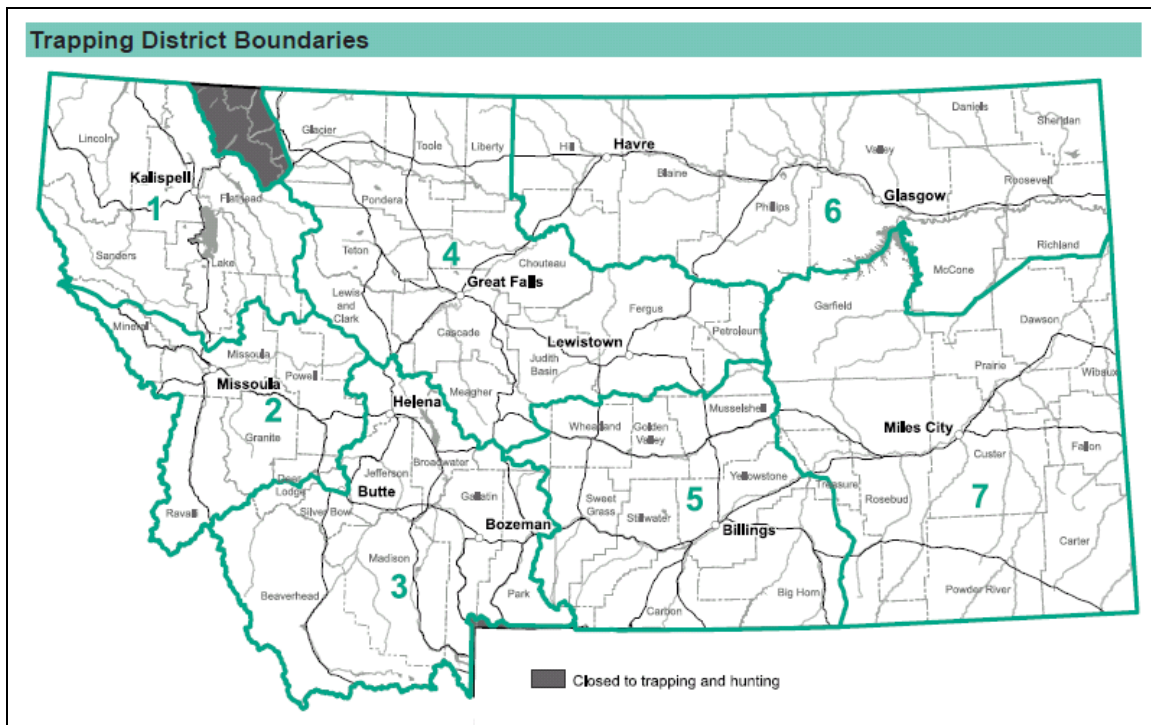


Figure 1. Montana map delineating furbearer regulation trapping districts and counties.

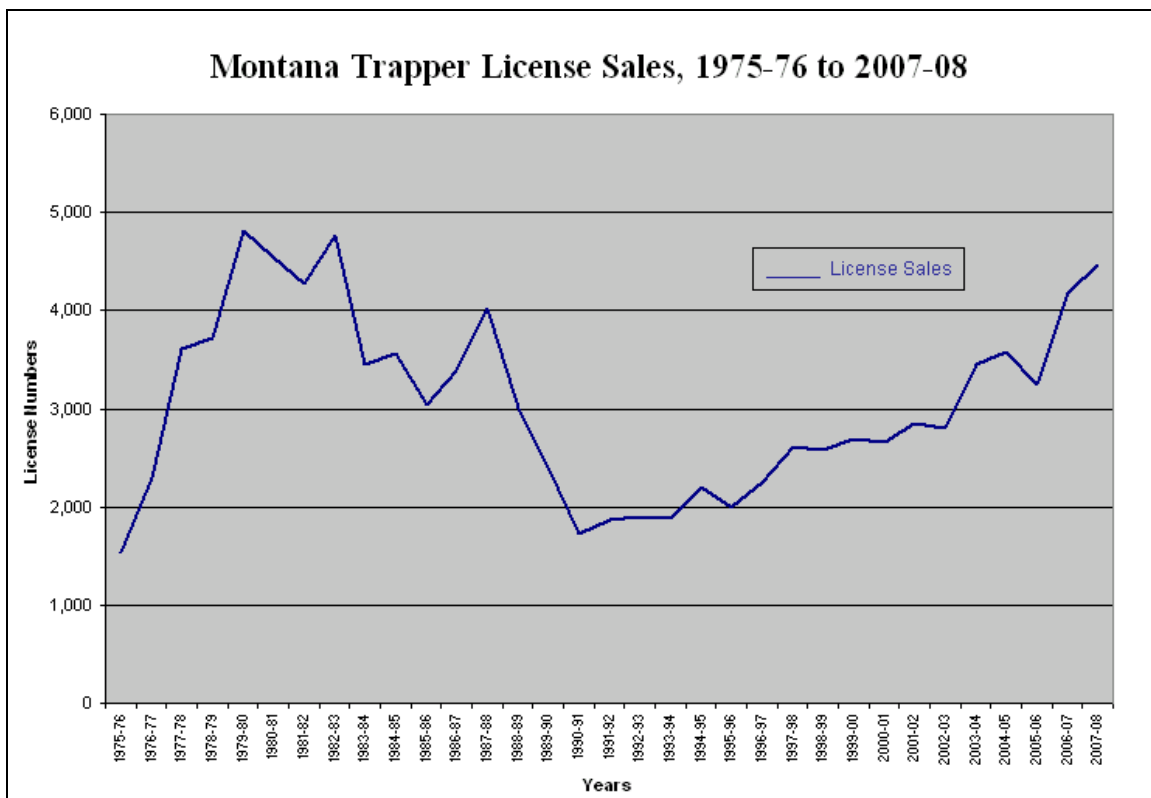


Figure 2. Montana trapper license sales trend, 1975-76 to 2007-08.

Table 1. Montana trapping license sales, 2008-2009.

License Type	Kalispell	Missoula	Bozeman	Great Falls	Billings	Glasgow	Miles City	Helena	Statewide
General	636	513	811	522	587	150	391	896	4,506
Youth	8	5	11	7	7	0	6	5	49
Landowner	1	4	14	30	20	4	33	13	119
Nonresident	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3
<b>Total</b>	645 (-2%)	522 (-1%)	836 (+10%)	559 (+2%)	614 (+0%)	155 (-10%)	430 (-2%)	916 (+23%)	4,677 (+5%)

Table 2. Montana furbearer, predator and nongame species harvest summary, 2008-2009.

Trapping District	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total*
Beaver	415	553	2,015	1,199	618	460	107	7,124
Otter	21	14	22	0	3	0	0	60 (0)
Muskrat	485	1,131	2,037	801	567	0	0	10,699
Mink	62	85	127	20	28	0	0	655
Marten	170	366	282	0	26	--	--	844
Fisher	1	6	--	--	--	--	--	7 (0)
Wolverine	2	0	0	2	0	--	--	4
Bobcat	258	184	292	298	503	71	822	2,428
Weasel	45	76	6	0	0	0	0	175
Skunk	48	113	180	361	643	0	299	1,845
Coyote	387	437	494	1,453	494	827	1,780	6,969
Fox	20	234	130	367	265	56	299	1,695
Raccoon	39	99	711	717	1,343	70	307	4,052
Badger	0	6	42	51	25	0	169	643
<b>Total</b>	1,953	3,304	6,338	5,269	4,515	1,484	3,783	37,201

\*Figure may include animals harvested in unknown trapping district and ( ) indicates incidental harvest.

Table 3. Montana furbearer, predator and nongame species 10-year harvest (legal) summary, 1999-2000 to 2008-2009.

Year	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Beaver	12,753	9,056	11,156	8,475	9,361		8,918	7,421	7,219	7,124
Otter	64	48	96	83	80	88	93	78	67	60
Muskrat	13,247	13,842	11,070	11,448	11,915		21,270	17,014	10,042	10,699
Mink	1,709	1,536	959	1,071	808		1,306	1,348	1,018	655
Marten	653	1,064	845	1,053	1,062	1,248	952	856	1,141	844
Fisher	5	7	7	7	8	7	9	7	6	7
Wolverine	4	14	10	15	10	11	11	9	9	4
Bobcat	1,411	1,398	1,702	1,786	1,783	2,114	2,201	2,228	2,389	2,428
Weasel	480	167	100	405	321		243	503	310	175
Skunk	2,762	1,570	1,616	1,422	2,996		2,325	1,933	2,599	1,845
Coyote	11,134	9,303	9,726	10,725	12,286		9,412	10,886	9,723	6,969
Fox	3,629	2,201	3,074	2,552	2,056		2,473	3,164	1,862	1,696
Raccoon	4,944	4,387	5,203	4,662	5,936		4,540	4,368	4,506	4,052
Badger	991	498	742	1,012	1,788		1,166	1,330	871	643
<b>TOTAL</b>	53,786	45,090	57,462	44,716	50,411		54,939	51,145	41,762	37,201

Table 4. Average pelt price reported by species, 1990-91 to 2008-09.

Year	Beaver	Otter	Muskrat	Mink	Marten	Fisher	Wolverine	Bobcat	Coyote	Red Fox	Raccoon	Weasel	Skunk	Badger
1990-91	9.52	25.15	0.73	13.84	25.47	35	140	90.98	13.01	8.45	4.32	0.27	4.05	5.29
1991-92	11.81	17.5	1.3	20.5	25.58	40	130	87	23.95	22.5	8.28	2.25	4.25	7.65
1992-93	8.02	39.76	1.18	10.21	17.24	35	135	85.37	22.18	11.17	10.68	3.5	4.52	8.38
1993-94	12.35	33.3	1.54	10.02	21.74	32.74	147.8	90.43	15.78	10.68	10.1	2	3.01	6.82
1994-95	14.95	30	1.67	9.31	15			81.75	20.61	15.33	9.3	2.66	3.4	11.87
1995-96	16.13	35.95	2.82	9.16	19.17		200	75.42	19.46	18.58	10.97	1.75	6.15	10
1996-97	23.59	30.98	3.83	14.48	25.01			124.05	24.68	17.74	15.26	1.83	3.86	11.19
1997-98	21.18	20	1.94	9.54	17.25			95.25	17.15	12.72	14.67	1	2.85	11.73
1998-99								85.5						
1999-00					19.33			98.67	22.06					
2000-01	15.98	59.17	1.71	8.37	19.95	28.62	212.94	106.05	18.93	16.24	10.02	1.5	3.73	15.98
2001-02	12.4	47.93	2.07	10.05	18.7	25.12	225	135.25	23.7	22.65	19.3	2	5	18.5
2002-03	14	75	2.1	10.5	19.5	25	225	203	30.7	24	11	3	7	21.5
2003-04	14.5	90	2.15	11	20.5	28.1	275	280.25	28.5	20	11.5	3	5.5	23
2004-05	15.25	94	2.25	11.5	19.5	28.25	275	325	30.7	21.5	11	3	7	23.5
2005-06	20.5	100	3.5	15	45.5	35	300	345	38.5	25	11.5	3	6.5	27.5
2006-07	23.49	80	3.2	12.88	61.57	74.31	217.85	257.33	43.36	20.84	22.05	4.96	4.04	27.57
2007-08	24.8	40.91	3.23	15.22	77.29	87.51	280.35	449.45	37.9	22.49	33.22	5.69	5.27	42.6
2008-09	25.21	30.85	2.55	11.53	37.58	42.83	254.67	281.35	30.7	21.59	17.86	4.02	2.32	24.8



## SPECIES HARVEST AND MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

### BEAVER

The statewide beaver harvest continues to gradually decline since the most recent peak harvest of over 16,000 animals during the 1996-97 season (Fig.3). The estimated 2008-09 harvest level was the lowest during the report period at an estimated 7,124 animals. This is 12% below the 10-year average harvest, despite the highest reported pelt price during the past 15 years (Table 5). Examining the trend in CPUE it appears harvest effort has generally declined also, indicating that less beaver are being taken per unit of effort (Fig. 4). Population monitoring activities for beaver are based completely on harvest data, with the CPUE considered to indicate relative population trend, which could be considered as declining, with recent increases since 2003-04. The comparison of CPUE for beaver to the other semi-aquatic species is shown in Fig. 51.

Generally low pelt prices and gradual habitat changes may be impacting beaver numbers in some local areas in the state, particularly in western Montana. For example, in the heavily developed Bitterroot Valley a long-term wetlands survey found an approximately 80% decrease in both acreage and the numbers of beaver ponds over a 20 year period. At the same time human created ponds increased by nearly 75% during the 23 year study time frame (Kudray and Schemm 2008).

Table 5. Beaver harvest, pelt price, and quota level if applicable, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

Year	TD 1	TD 2	TD 3	TD 4	TD 5	TD 6	TD 7	State	Pelt Price	Quota
1994-95	823	1173	2795	2637	2164	1847	248	11699	14.95	
1995-96	679	846	1854	2118	2127	711	285	8620	16.13	
1996-97	626	1118	2961	5681	3453	1590	1122	16550	23.59	
1997-98	698	1194	4460	3005	2227	972	959	13515	21.18	
1998-99	510	1045	3243	3942	1900	718	276	11634		
1999-00	908	1298	2821	2966	1961	2265	587	12805		
2000-01	399	1095	2623	1756	2528	407	247	9056	15.98	
2001-02	499	1394	3242	2953	1266	1273	460	11156	12.41	
2002-03	685	1071	2296	2040	1201	777	399	8475	14.01	
2003-04	424	1485	2336	2074	2175	477	389	9361	14.51	
2004-05									15.25	
2005-06	767	628	2852	1970	856	1626	219	8918	20.51	
2006-07	479	944	2067	1450	1509	661	310	7421	23.49	
2007-08	209	812	1409	788	698	994	313	7219	24.81	
2008-09	415	513	2015	1199	618	460	107	7124	25.21	

## Statewide Beaver Harvest

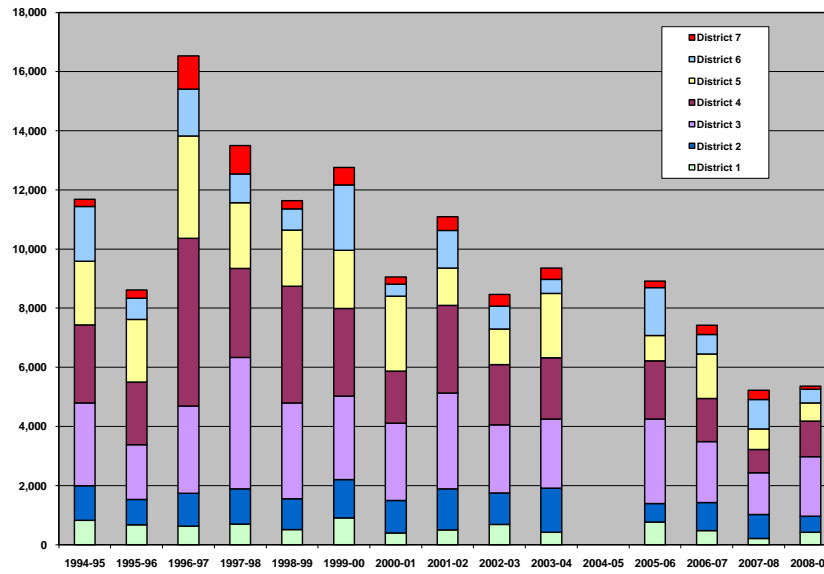


Figure 3. Statewide beaver harvest by trapping district, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

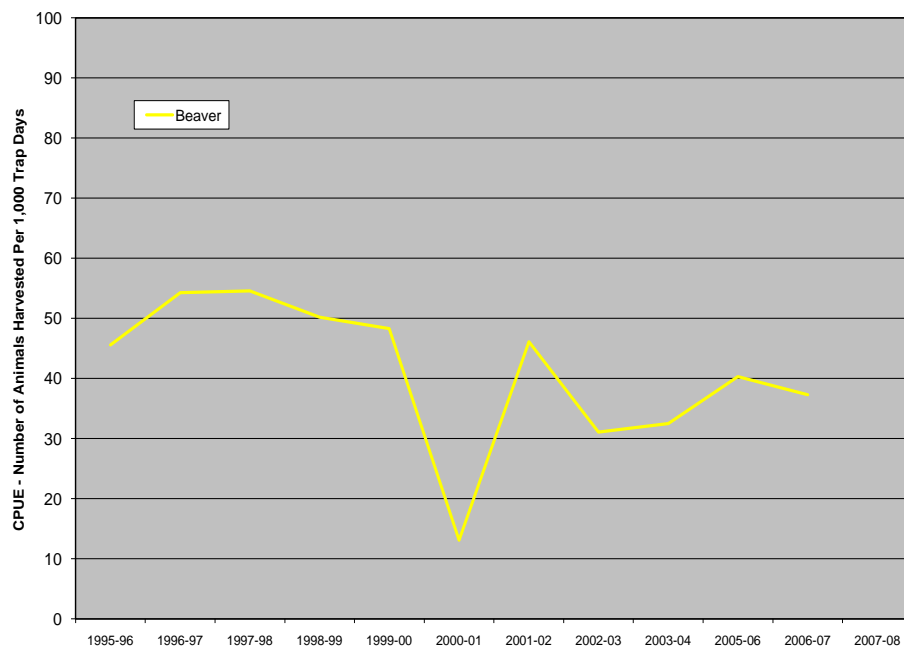


Figure 4. Statewide trend in Beaver harvest from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.

## OTTER

Otter are one of the five furbearers that are required to be registered and pelt tagged so that the actual number of harvested animals is known. The otter harvest has always been managed through a trapper limit and more recently trapping district (TD) quotas. Up through the 2001-02 season, a one otter per trapper limit was in place, which was changed in 2002-03 to a two otter limit under a regulated quota in each of the seven TD's. The two otter and quota change was made in response to healthy populations, to reduce incidental take, and more interest by trappers as pelt prices were increasing. Quotas were used as a management tool to maintain well distributed and healthy otter populations while providing more opportunity and flexibility to harvest otter by the trapping community. The total quota for the state has increased from 84 in 2002-03 to 95 in 2007-08. The statewide otter harvest averaged in the mid-60s until pelt prices increased in the early 2000s with a peak price (Table 6) and corresponding harvest in 2005-06 (Fig. 6). Despite somewhat higher harvest levels in the mid-2000s, the long-term harvest level and proportion of the harvest by TD has remained relatively stable (Fig. 5).

The statewide trend in otter using CPUE is relatively stable (Fig. 6) and a comparison of otter CPUE with the other semi aquatic species is presented in Fig 51. Population monitoring for otter consists of the collection and analysis of biological data from the harvest sample through mandatory carcass turn-in from trappers. Trends in population parameters that show juveniles per adult female, age structure, sex ratio, and median age are shown in Fig. 7 to 10. Again, these parameters indicate a relatively stable population on a statewide basis.

Table 6. Otter harvest, pelt price, and harvest quota if applicable, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

Year	TD 1	TD 2	TD 3	TD 4	TD 5	TD 6	TD 7	State	Pelt Price	Quota
1994-95	23	7	23	4	5	0	0	62	30.01	
1995-96	17	8	22	6	7	0	1	61	35.95	
1996-97	17	8	27	7	6	0	0	65	30.98	
1997-98	15	8	41	13	7	0	0	84	20.01	
1998-99	17	4	34	9	3	0	0	67		
1999-00	18	9	26	8	3	0	0	64		
2000-01	13	15	18	1	1	0	0	48	59.17	
2001-02	28	23	39	5	1	0	0	96	47.93	
2002-03	21	13	35	8	4	0	1	83	75.01	84
2003-04	19	18	33	8	2	0	0	80	90.01	84
2004-05	25	19	32	8	3	0	1	88	94.01	92
2005-06	20	22	36	8	5	0	2	93	100.01	93
2006-07	21	17	29	6	5	0	0	78	80.01	93
2007-08	24	14	17	5	2	0	1	67	40.91	95
2008-09	21	14	22	0	3	0	0	60	30.85	95

## Statewide Otter Harvest

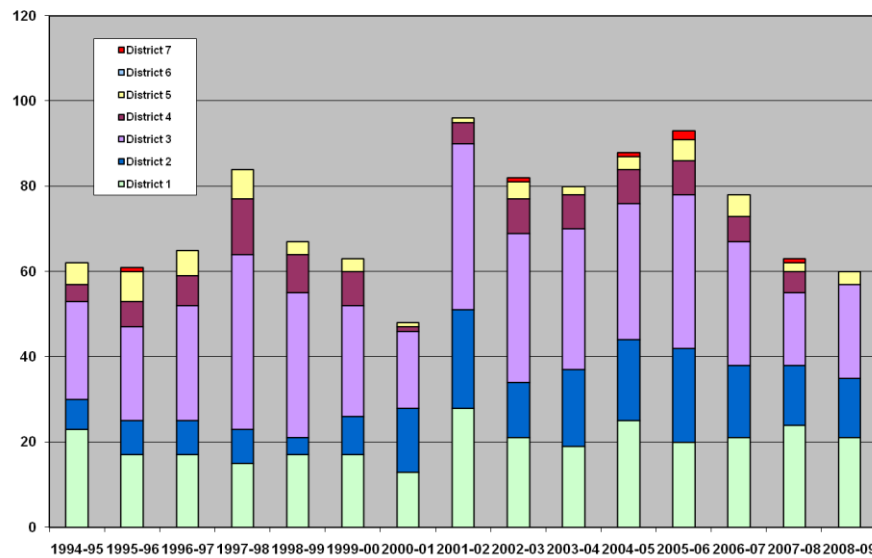


Figure 5. Statewide otter harvest by trapping district, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

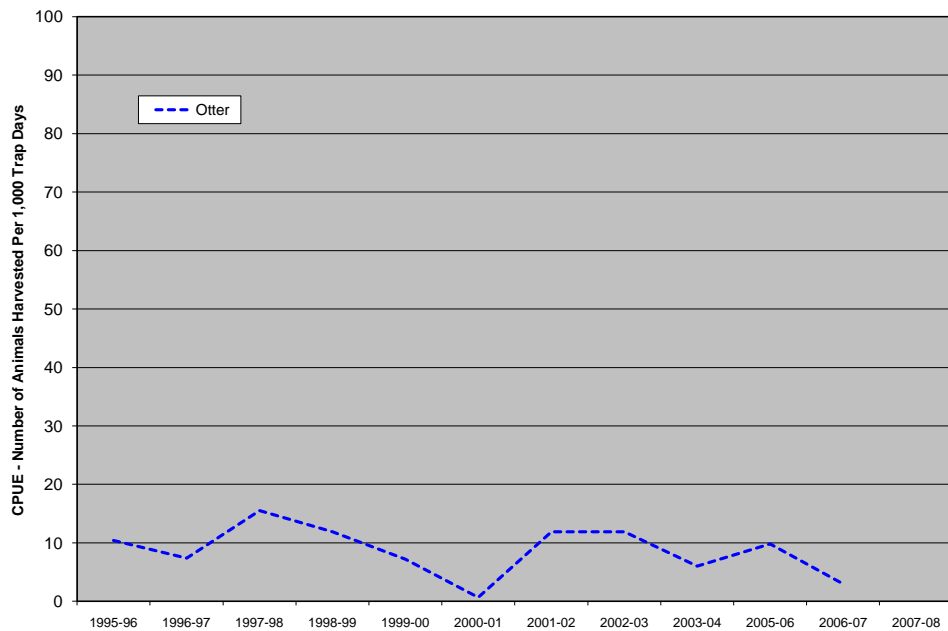


Figure 6. Statewide trend in Otter harvest from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.

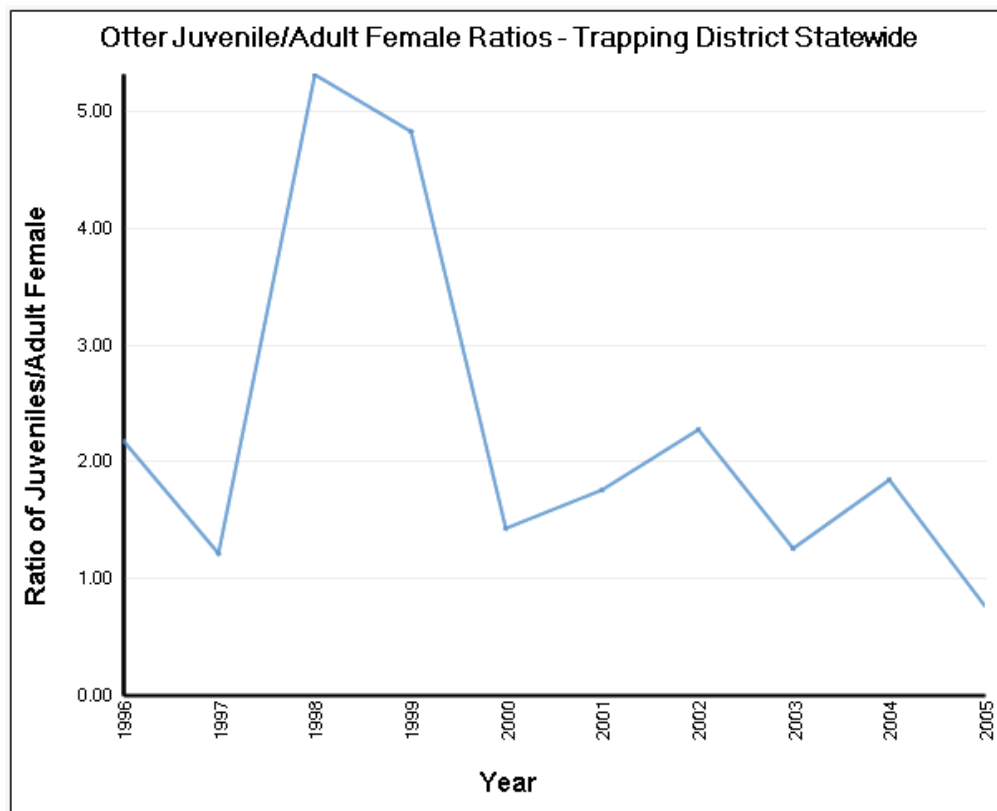


Figure 7. Otter population parameter of juveniles per adult female ratio.

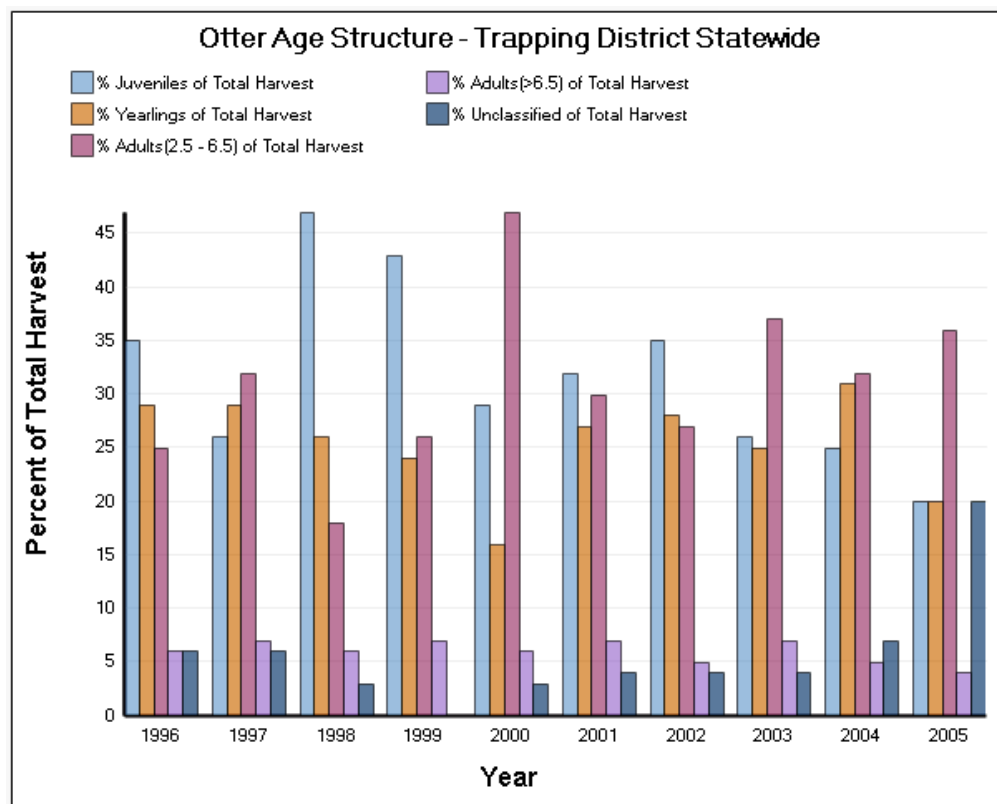


Figure 8. Otter population parameter of age structure.

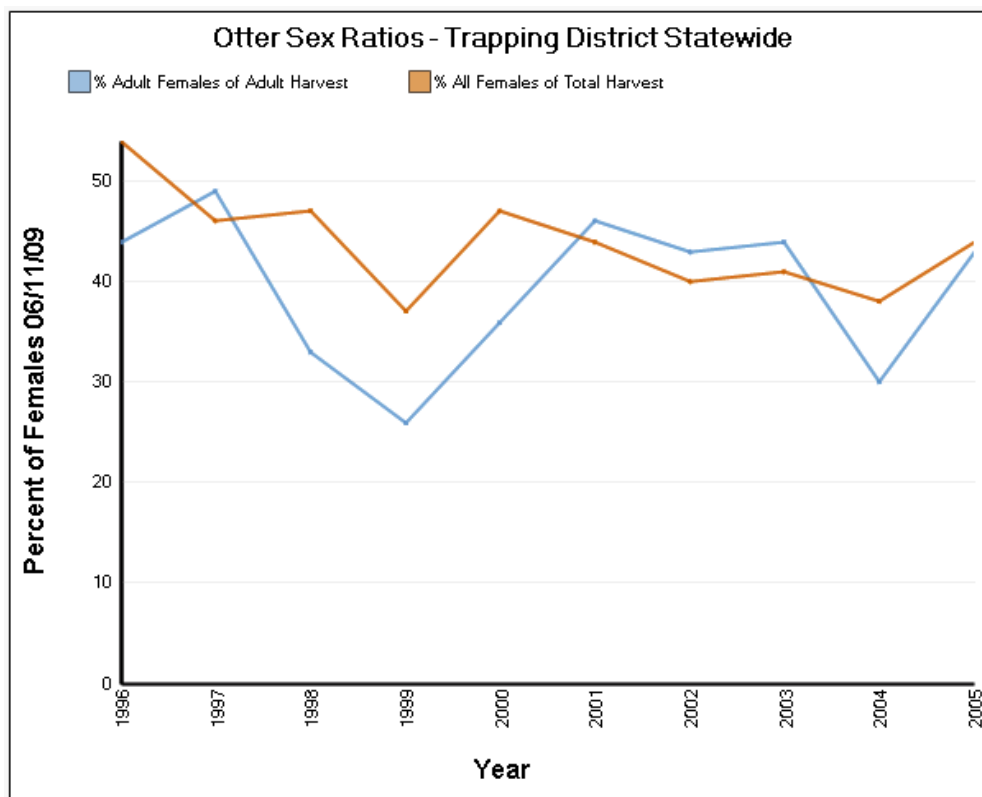


Figure 9. Otter population parameter of sex ratio.

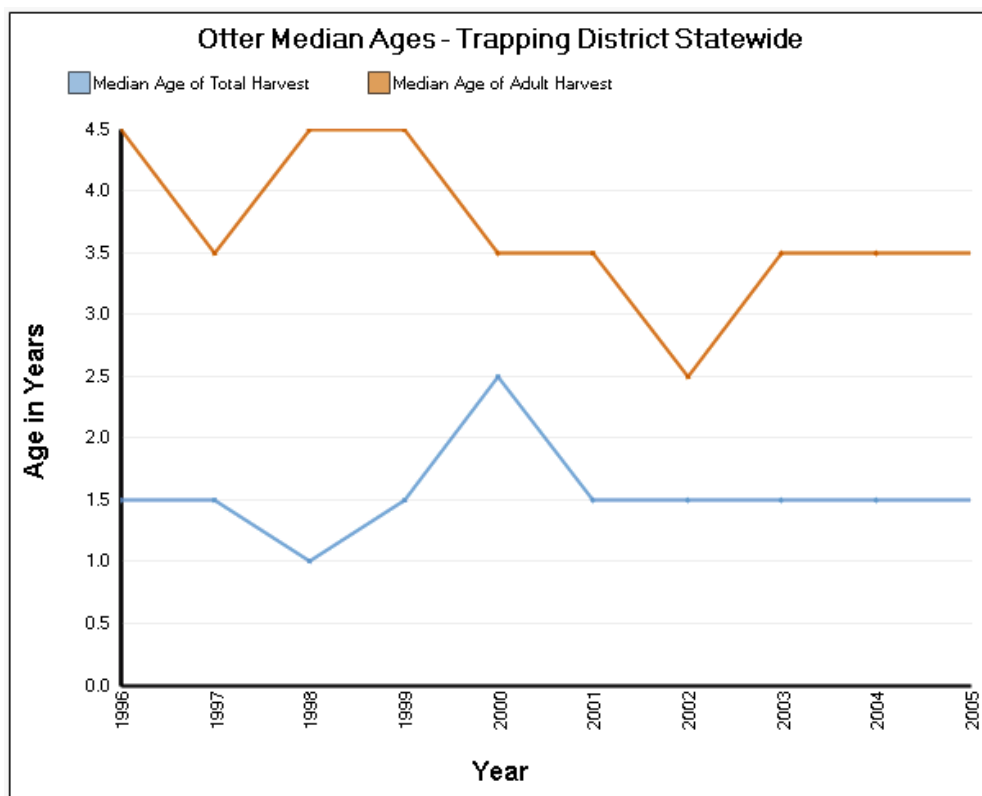


Figure 10. Otter population parameter of median ages.

## MUSKRAT

The statewide muskrat harvest continues to remain relatively stable, with a recent peak harvest of over 20,000 animals during the 2005-06 season (Table 7) that was nearly twice the number estimated for the previous several years. This was accompanied by higher than average pelt prices of \$3.51. However, the estimated 2008-09 harvest level of 10,699 animals was 24% below the 10-year average harvest, despite good pelt prices (Fig. 11). Examining the trend in CPUE it appears harvest effort has generally increased, indicating that more muskrat are being taken per unit of effort (Fig. 12). Population monitoring activities for muskrat are based completely on harvest data, with CPUE considered to be an indicator of relative population trend, which could be considered as stable to increasing, with recent increases. The comparison of CPUE for muskrat to the other semi-aquatic species is shown in Fig. 51.

Table 7. Muskrat harvest, pelt price, and harvest quota if applicable, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

Year	TD 1	TD 2	TD 3	TD 4	TD 5	TD 6	TD 7	State	Pelt Price	Quota
1994-95	1393	4905	4394	2152	925	404	83	14256	1.67	
1995-96	716	4177	3271	1791	1276	181	39	11727	2.82	
1996-97	2980	3992	2732	3712	1799	772	134	16121	3.83	
1997-98	2552	3887	5043	3519	1499	2122	205	18826	1.94	
1998-99	2270	2240	3495	2609	709	811	111	12243		
1999-00	1643	3156	2651	3049	794	763	1191	13247		
2000-01	897	6170	2905	536	2844	129	361	13842	1.71	
2001-02	556	5681	3409	599	596	132	43	11070	2.07	
2002-03	1427	3915	4571	952	308	156	119	11448	2.11	
2003-04	869	3923	5625	864	318	45	270	11915	2.15	
2004-05									2.25	
2005-06	1561	4902	9862	2203	888	1217	637	21270	3.51	
2006-07	1850	4821	5210	2418	1868	728	117	17014	3.21	
2007-08	510	806	1188	761	522	442	146	10042	3.23	
2008-09	485	1131	2037	801	567	0	0	10699	2.55	

# Statewide Muskrat Harvest

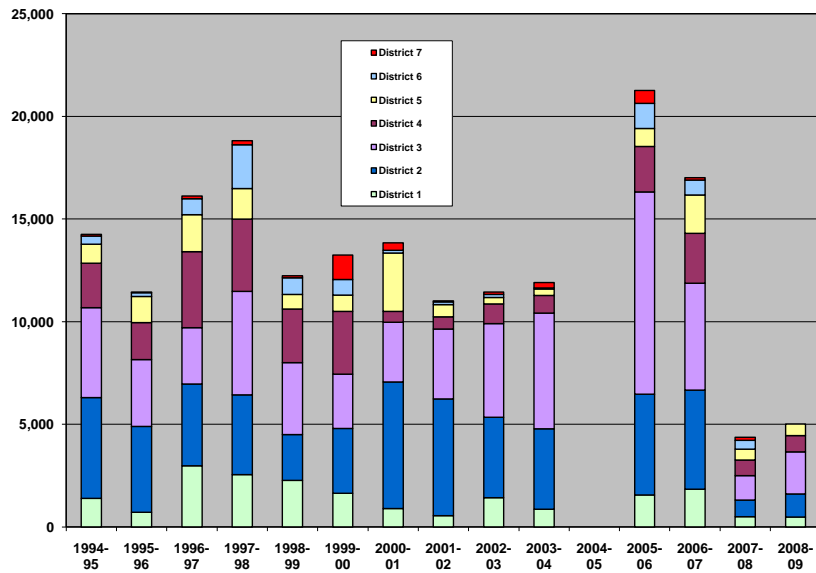


Figure 11. Statewide muskrat harvest by trapping district, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

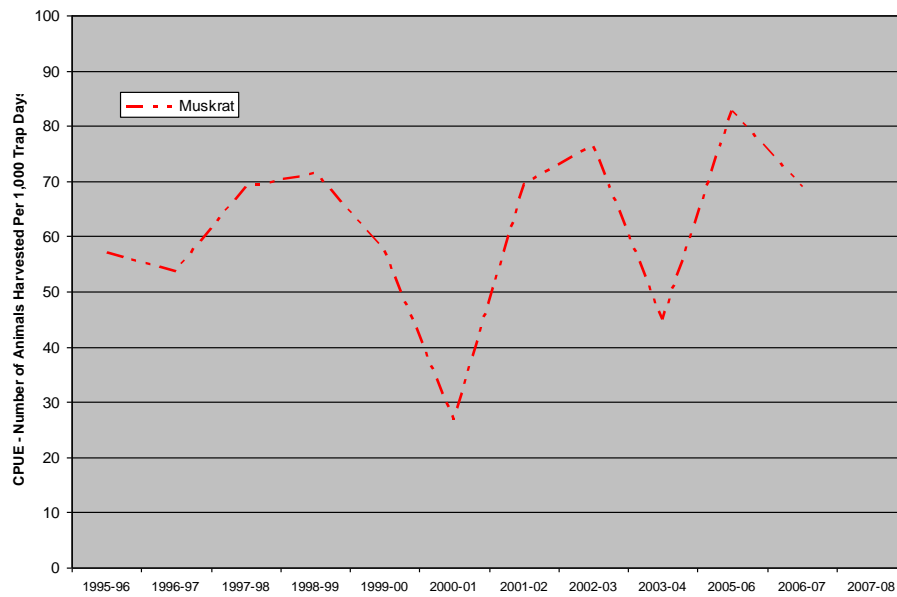


Figure 12. Statewide trend in Muskrat harvest from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.



## MINK

The statewide mink harvest continues to remain somewhat stable and within a general range of between 1,000 to 1,500 animals, with several years above or below this range since 1994-95 (Table 8). Mink harvest is considered to be somewhat correlated to interest in muskrat trapping and this seems to be the case during the more recent 2005-06 and 2006-07 seasons when peak muskrat harvest correlated well with above average mink harvest levels in the 1,300 range. However, the estimated 2008-09 harvest of 655 mink statewide was 47% below the 10-year harvest average (Fig. 13), despite good pelt prices (Table 8). This was the lowest mink harvest in the last 15 years and represented declines in harvest in all trapping districts (Fig. 13). Examining the trend in CPUE it appears harvest effort has generally stayed similar, with changes in harvest effort due to interest in muskrat trapping, indicating that mink are being taken at about the same rate per unit of effort (Fig. 14). Population monitoring activities for muskrat are based completely on harvest data, with CPUE considered to be an indicator of relative population trend, which could be considered as stable, despite the low estimated harvest during the 2008-09 season. The comparison of CPUE for mink to the other semi-aquatic species is shown in Fig. 51.

Table 8. Mink harvest, pelt price, and harvest quota if applicable, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

Year	TD 1	TD 2	TD 3	TD 4	TD 5	TD 6	TD 7	State	Pelt Price	Quota
1994-95	187	215	274	234	97	121	17	1145	9.31	
1995-96	140	290	111	126	128	87	34	919	9.16	
1996-97	252	134	339	488	126	280	20	1638	14.48	
1997-98	220	174	381	248	289	133	49	1493	9.54	
1998-99	285	162	309	171	120	27	3	1078		
1999-00	218	183	428	325	38	476	41	1709		
2000-01	95	198	1038	103	57	15	30	1536	8.37	
2001-02	111	300	307	89	61	43	32	959	10.05	
2002-03	92	229	564	94	13	38	40	1071	10.51	
2003-04	43	290	331	71	45	3	25	808	11.01	
2004-05									2.25	
2005-06	62	151	563	92	92	340	6	1306	15.01	
2006-07	94	269	678	129	158	18	3	1348	12.88	
2007-08	122	101	80	51	86	182	98	1018	15.22	
2008-09	62	85	127	20	28	0	0	655	11.53	

## Statewide Mink Harvest

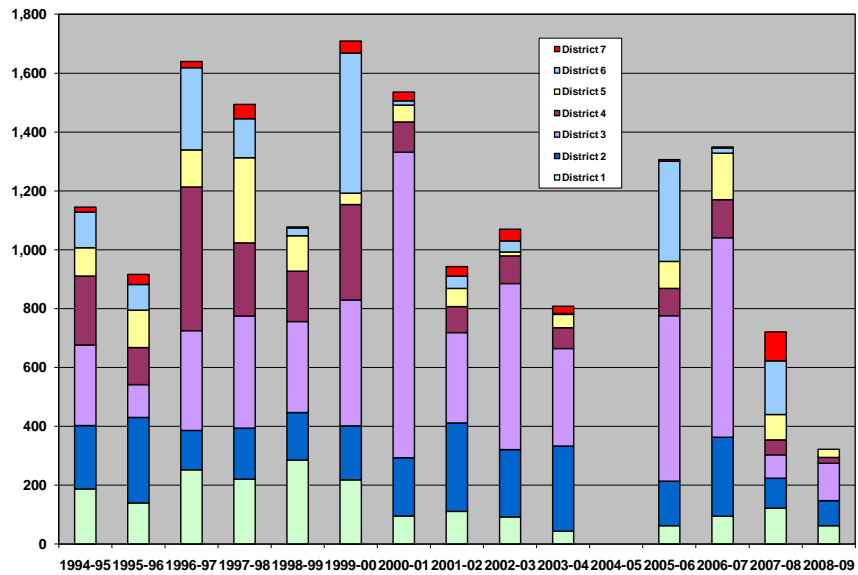


Figure 13. Statewide mink harvest by trapping district, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

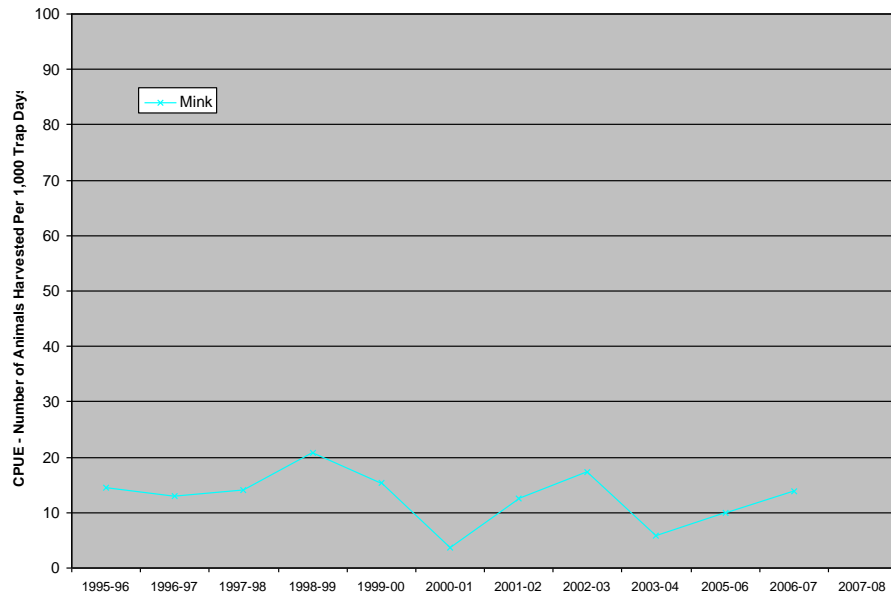


Figure 14. Statewide trend in Mink harvest from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.

## MARTEN

Marten are one of the five furbearers that are required to be registered and pelt tagged so that the actual number of harvested animals is known. The statewide marten harvest continues to remain relatively stable, with higher than average harvest levels as recently as the 2004-05 and 2007-08 seasons (Fig. 15). The 2008-09 harvest level of 844 marten was 12% below the 10-year average harvest but well within the range of 653 to 1323 over the past 15 years. The lower harvest in 2008-09 may correspond to a similar decline of 39% in pelt prices from the previous three year period (Table 9). Examining the trend in CPUE it appears harvest effort has decreased somewhat on a statewide basis, indicating that less marten are being taken per unit of effort (Fig.16). Also, the distribution of the marten harvest is apparently shifting from TD 1 in northwestern Montana to TD 3 and TD 2 in southwestern and west central Montana, respectively (Fig. 15). Primary marten habitat in TD 1 is located almost exclusively on public land. There is speculation that trapper access to these public lands has decreased over time from road and area closures to protect other species.

Population monitoring for marten has consisted of analyzing harvest data and using the collection and analysis of biological data from the harvest sample through mandatory skull turn-in from trappers. However, marten skull collection was discontinued beginning with the 2008-09 season because of the difficulty in reconciling individual skulls to male/female categories for age data. The statewide trend in marten using CPUE is a stable to declining trend (Fig.16) and a comparison of marten CPUE with the other terrestrial species is presented in Fig 52. Trend in population parameters show an above average of three juveniles per adult female (Fig. 17), a positive age structure bias to juveniles (Fig. 18), a stable sex ratio (Fig. 19), with a slight decrease in median age of adults and median age of total harvest at one and a half, indicating a strong proportion of juveniles in the population (Fig. 20). Again, these parameters indicate a relatively stable or slightly declining population on a statewide basis.

Table 9. Marten harvest, pelt price, and harvest quota if applicable, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

Year	TD 1	TD 2	TD 3	TD 4	TD 5	TD 6	TD 7	State	Pelt Price	Quota
1994-95	868	315	131	4	5			1323	15.01	
1995-96	433	167	202	0	0			802	19.17	
1996-97	513	172	143	0	2			830	25.01	
1997-98	403	291	192	9	5			900	17.25	
1998-99	473	172	61	3	7			716		
1999-00	313	183	149	1	7			653	19.33	
2000-01	560	326	174	1	3			1064	19.95	
2001-02	359	220	266	0	0			845	18.71	
2002-03	419	241	390	3	0			1053	19.51	
2003-04	459	339	259	2	3			1062	20.51	
2004-05	290	374	560	3	21			1248	19.51	
2005-06	280	265	370	1	36			952	45.51	
2006-07	143	268	418	2	25			856	61.57	
2007-08	245	446	441	0	9			1141	77.29	
2008-09	170	366	282	0	26			844	37.58	

# Statewide Marten Harvest

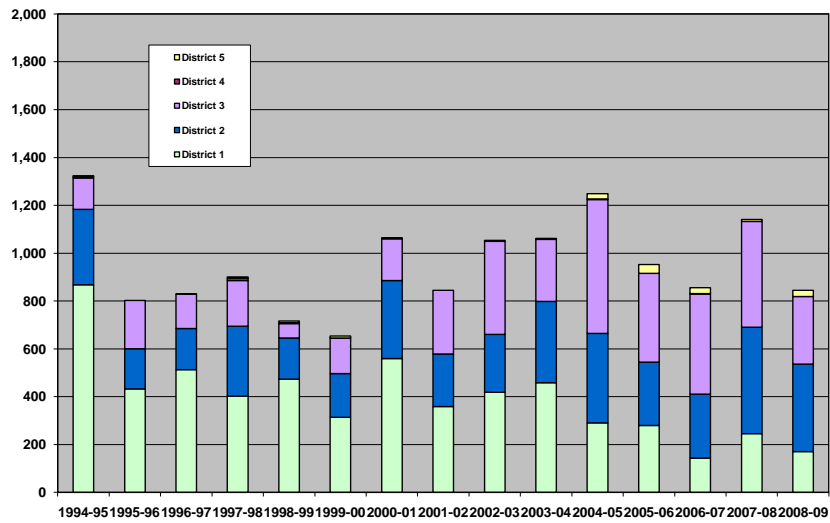


Figure 15. Statewide marten harvest by trapping district, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

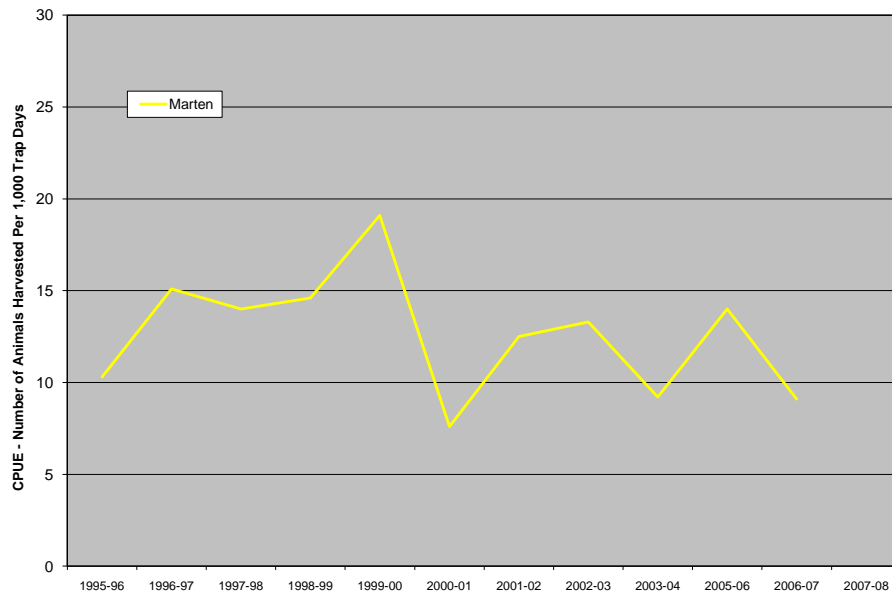


Figure 16. Statewide trend in Marten harvest from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.

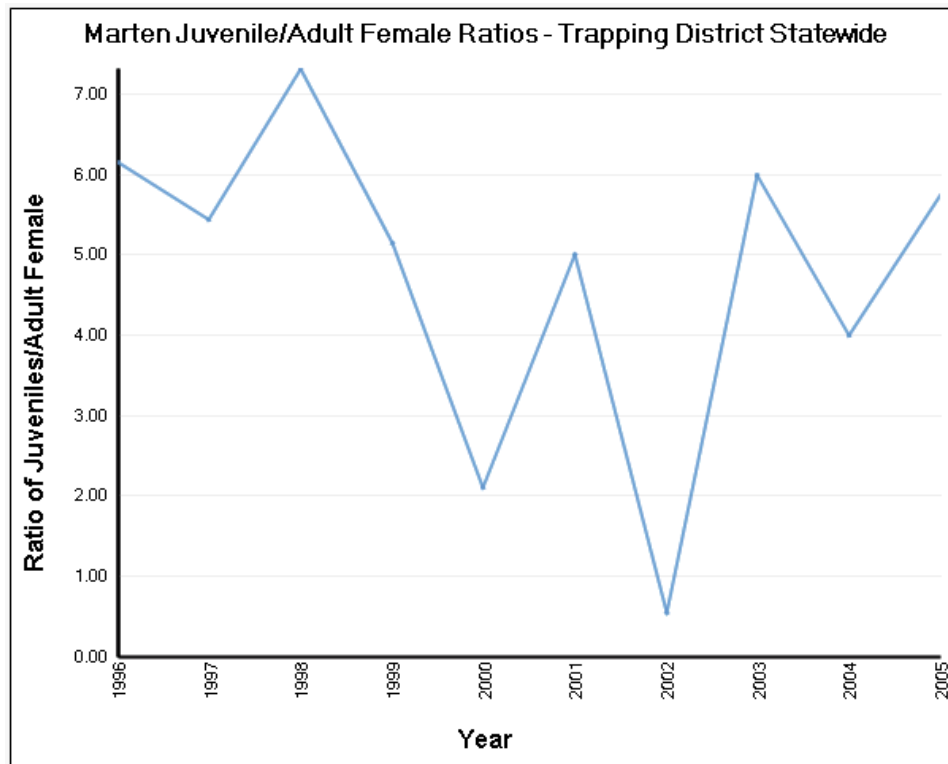


Figure 17. Marten population parameter of juvenile per adult female ratio.

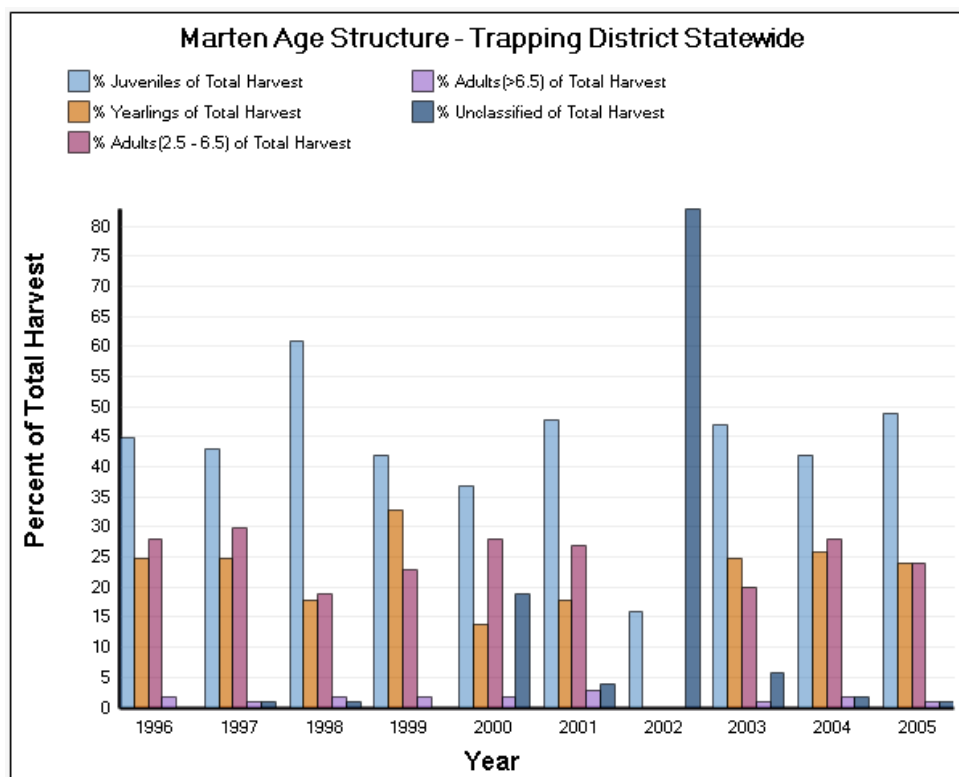


Figure 18. Marten population parameter of age structure.

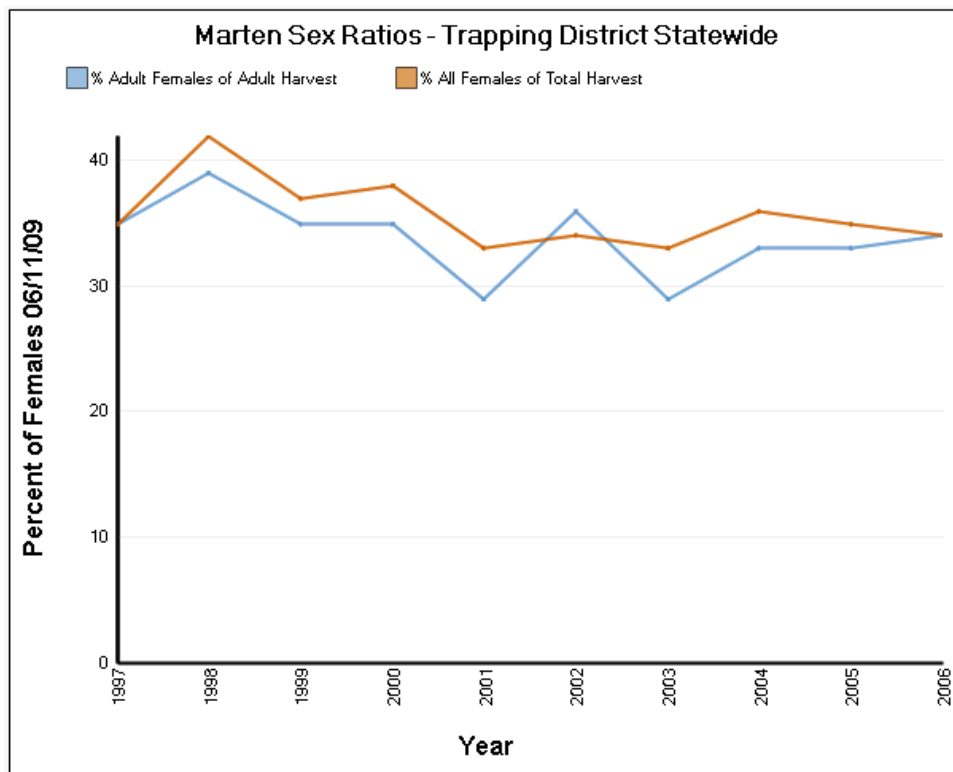


Figure 19. Marten population parameter of sex ratio.

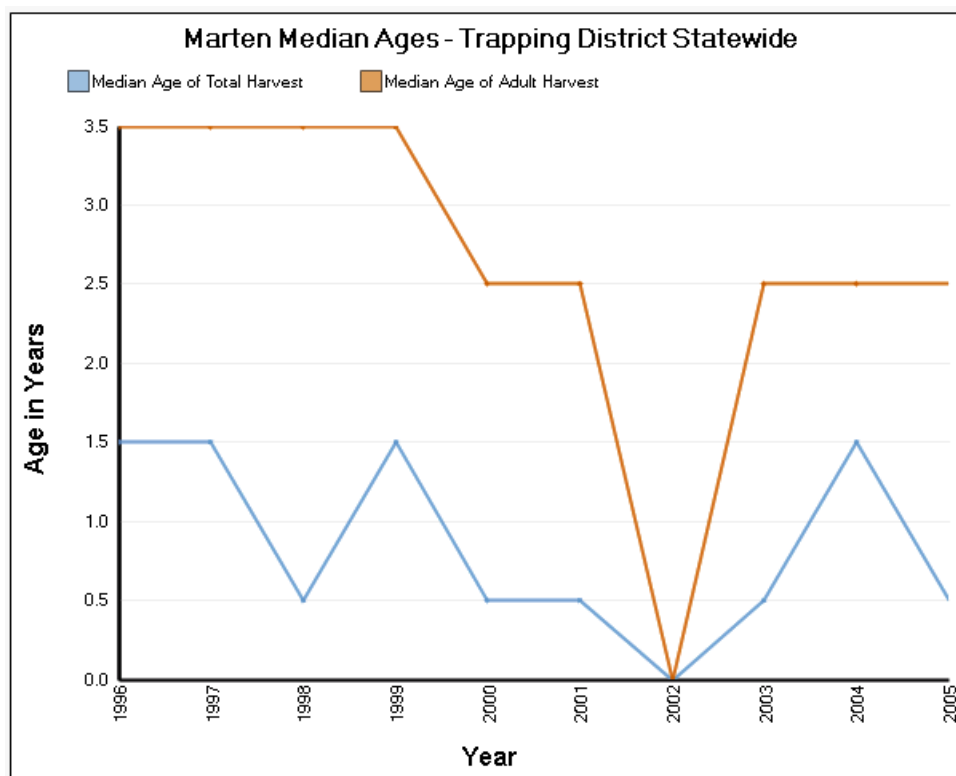


Figure 20. Marten population parameter of median ages.

## FISHER

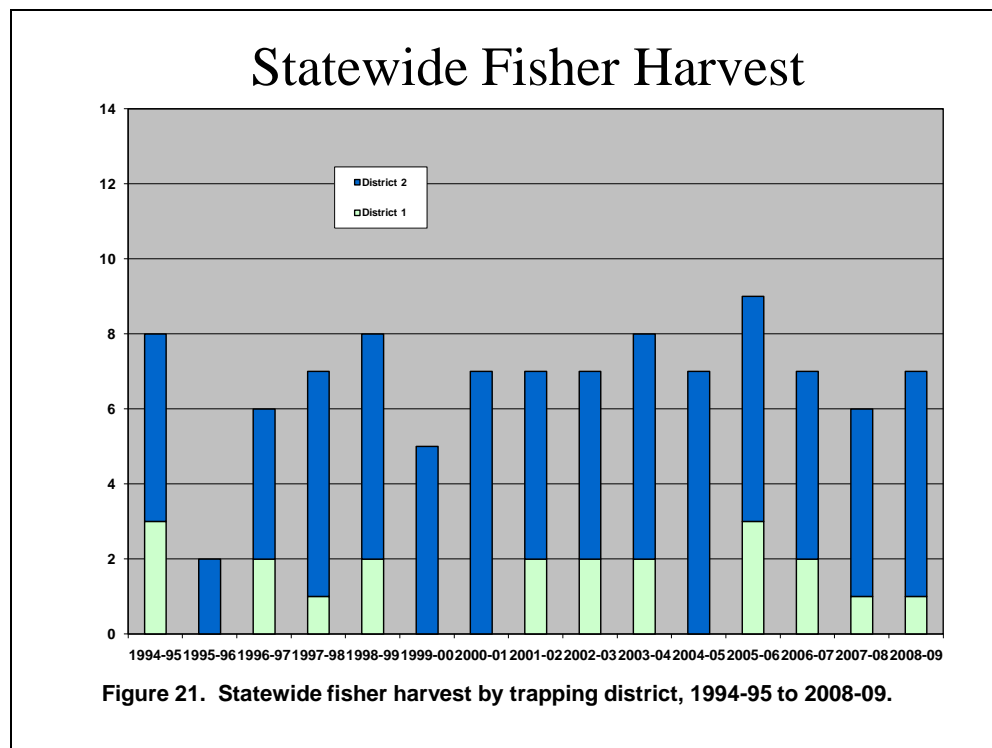
The fisher harvest has always been managed through a one per trapper limit and quotas in trapping district (TD) 1 and 2. Up through the 1993-94 season the quota was 10 in each TD, after which the quotas were reduced to 5 in each TD until 1996, when the TD 1 quota was reduced to 2 animals for a statewide quota of 7 fisher (Table 10). Since the original quotas were established, these conservative adjustments have been made that were based on harvest rates, population parameters and snow track survey data. These changes have provided for a sustainable harvest level that is conservatively matched with the maintenance of the current fisher population size and distribution relative to available habitats. The recent 2008-09 quota proposal used a new predictive habitat model that indicates moderate to high suitability fisher habitats comprise approximately 6,504 mi<sup>2</sup> in west central and northwestern Montana, with TD 2 having over 50% more of the high suitability habitat than TD 1. A statewide female subquota was also established for the 2008-09 season of 2 females to add an additional measure of protection for the reproductive segment of the population to further insure harvest has no influence on statewide population status. Given fisher distribution relative to habitat availability, fisher habitat capacity in the state appears to be correlated with similar levels of occupancy (Vinkey 2003) and not unduly impacted by what is now a history of highly managed harvest.

Fisher are one of the five furbearers that are required to be registered and pelt tagged so that the actual number of harvested animals is known. The statewide fisher harvest continues to remain very stable (Fig. 21). The 2008-09 harvest level of 7 fisher was within 2% of the 10-year average annual harvest level. Under the restrictive quota system, the harvest of no more than 7 animals was achieved in both 2006-07 and 2007-08 even when pelt prices more than doubled from the previous year (Table 10). Examining the trend in CPUE it appears harvest effort has been relatively stable, indicating that the same number of fisher are being taken per unit of effort (Fig. 22).

Population monitoring of fisher consists of analyzing harvest data and using the collection and analysis of biological data from the harvest sample through mandatory carcass turn-in from trappers. The statewide trend in fisher using CPUE is a stable trend (Fig. 22) and a comparison of fisher CPUE with the other terrestrial species is presented in Fig 52. The sample of harvested fisher provide a small sample size, so the population parameters are more difficult to interpret. However, the population trend from these parameters show about 2 juveniles per adult female (Fig. 23), a mixed age structure with a good representation of juveniles in most years (Fig. 24), a low female sex ratio in most years (Fig. 25), with a higher than expected median age of adults and expected median age of the total harvest (Fig. 26).

Table 10. Fisher harvest, pelt price, and harvest quota if applicable, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

Year	TD 1	TD 2	TD 3	TD 4	TD 5	TD 6	TD 7	State	Pelt Price	Quota
1994-95	3	5						8		10
1995-96	0	2						2		10
1996-97	2	4						6		7
1997-98	1	6						7		7
1998-99	2	6						8		7
1999-00	0	5						5		7
2000-01	0	7						7	28.62	7
2001-02	2	5						7	25.12	7
2002-03	2	5						7	25.01	7
2003-04	2	6						8	28.11	7
2004-05	0	7						7	28.25	7
2005-06	3	6						9	35.01	7
2006-07	2	5						7	74.31	7
2007-08	1	5						6	87.51	7
2008-09	1	6						7	42.83	7





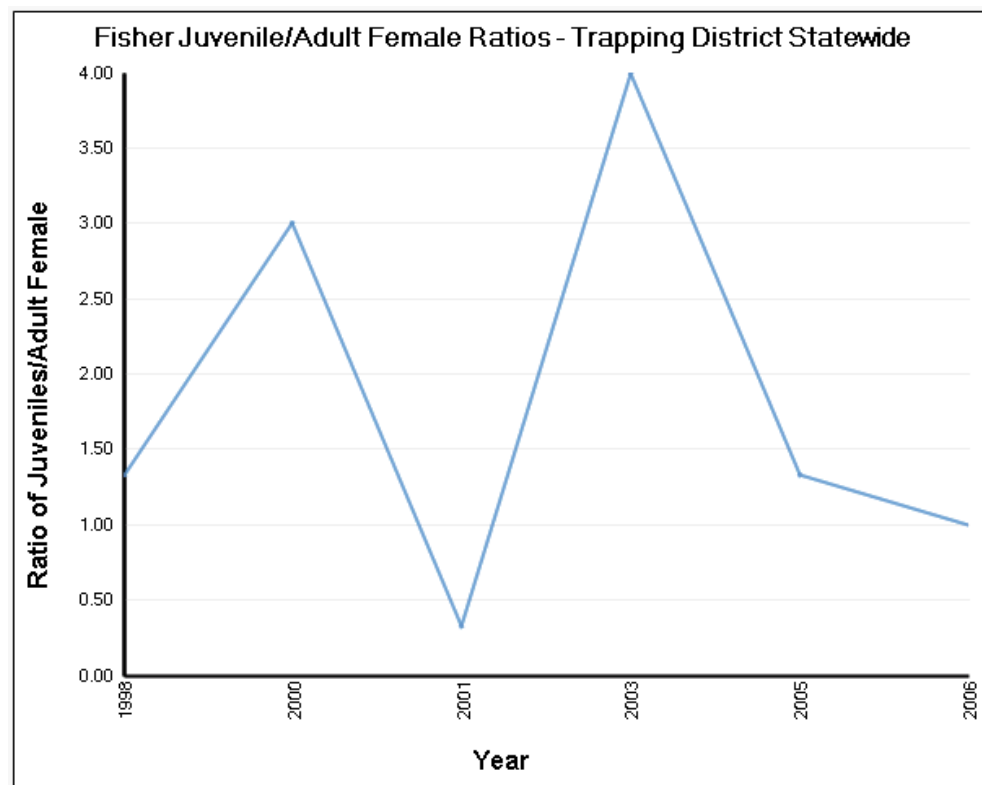
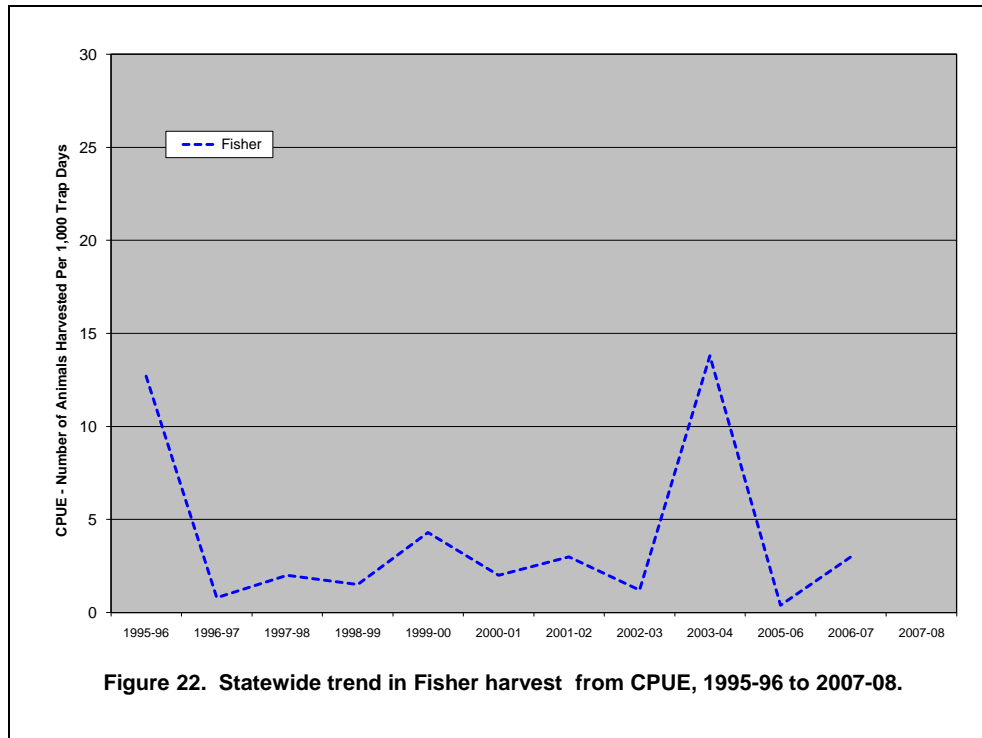


Figure 23. Fisher population parameters of juvenile per adult female ratio.

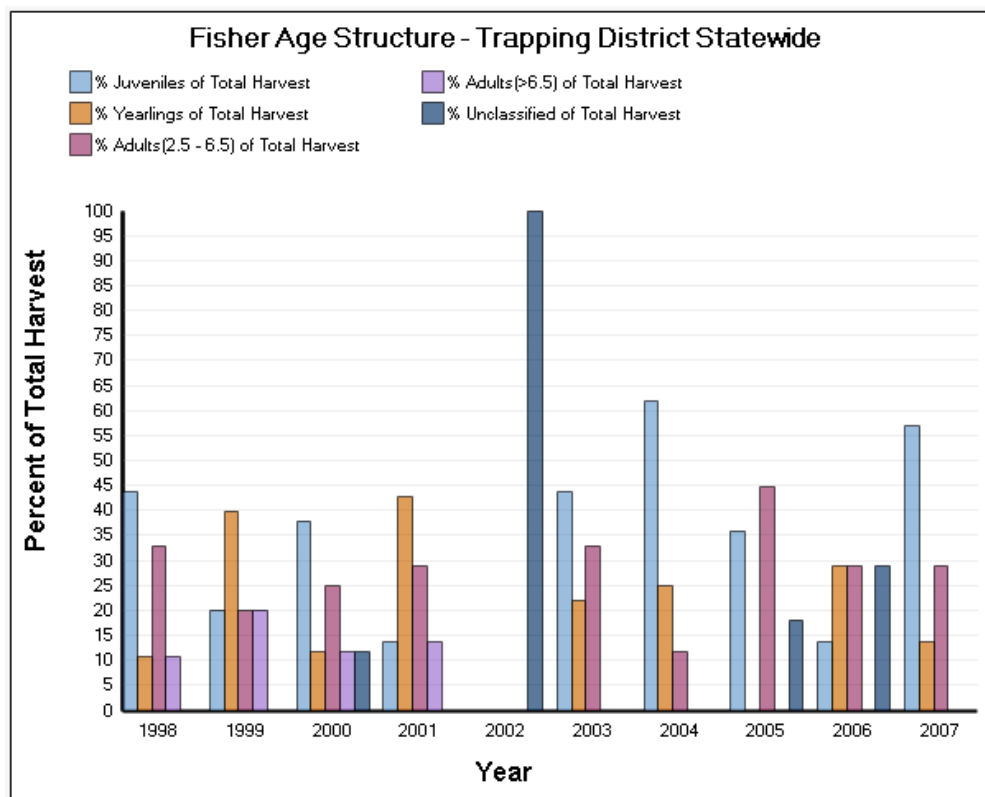


Figure 24. Fisher population parameters of age structure.

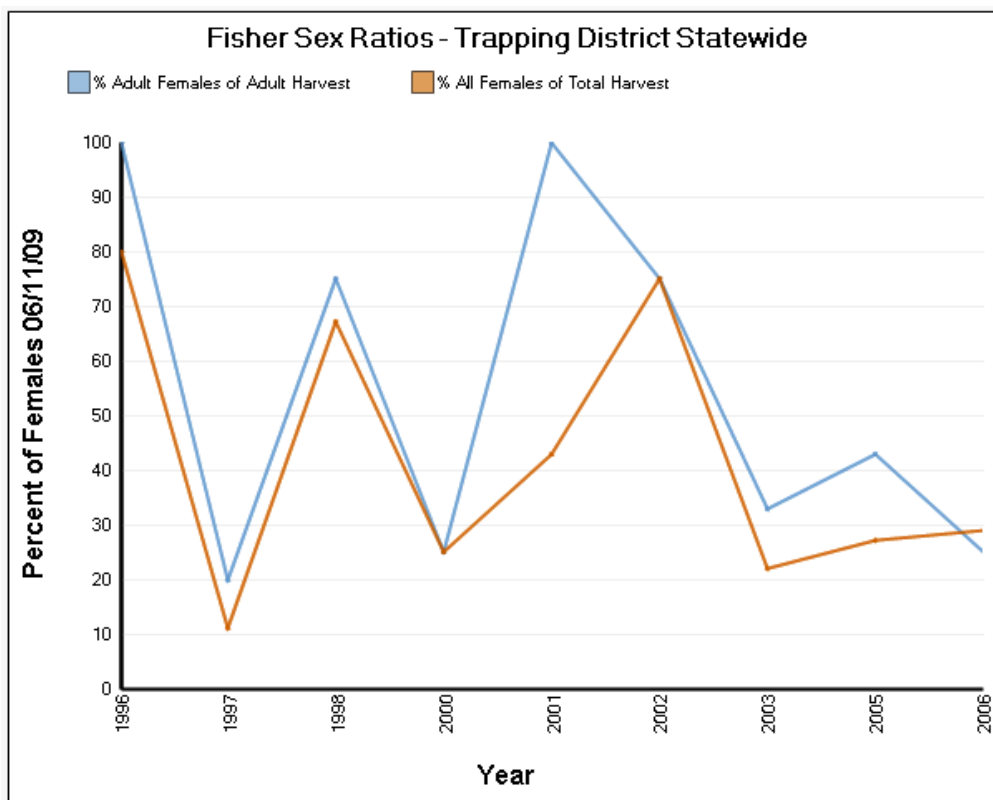


Figure 25. Fisher population parameters of sex ratio.

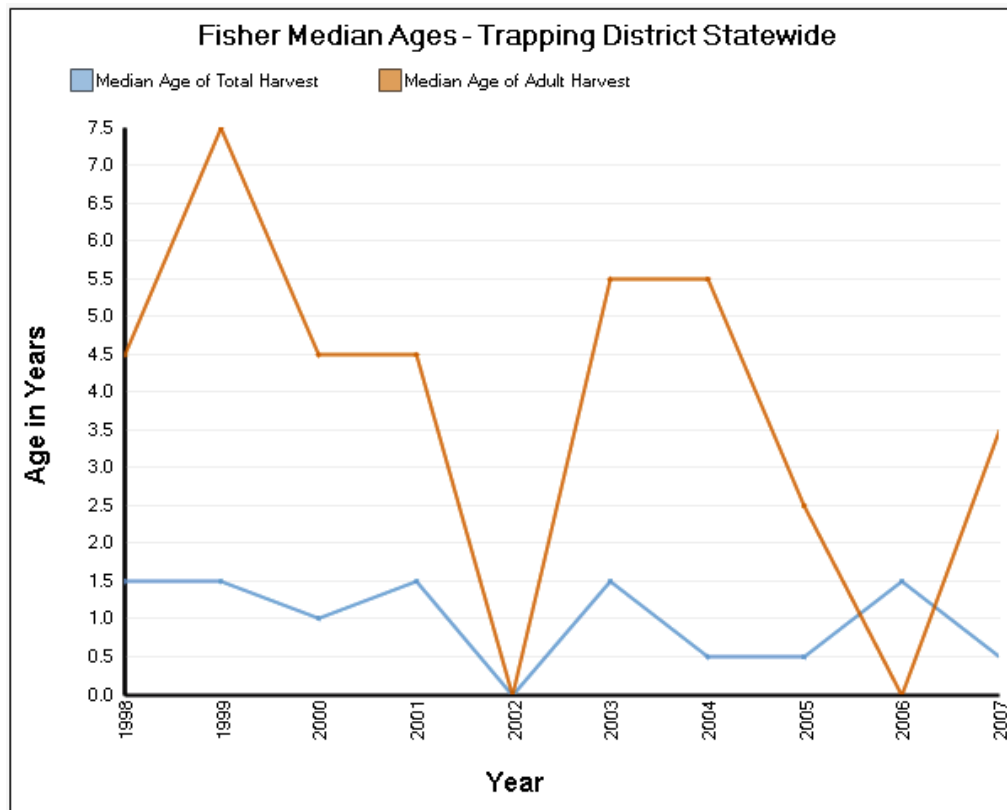


Figure 26. Fisher population parameter of median ages.

## WOLVERINE

Since wolverines were first classified as a state furbearer in the late 1970s, harvest was regulated by a one wolverine per trapper limit. Wolverines were considered recovered in Montana from a low point in the 1930s and now occupied the western third of the state. A study in the mid-1970s found that wolverine were at relatively high densities in the South Fork of the Flathead River drainage. Harvest during the past 30 years was considered stable and somewhat self-regulating with an average of 10.5 wolverine taken annually (range 2 - 22 per year) during the period. However, recent research on the species has provided new information regarding wolverine ecology, better defined wolverine habitat, examined genetic relationships, survival, and landscape connectivity. FWP's furbearer program has provided funds and logistical support to these studies. Inman et al. (2007) used research results from the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem to develop a habitat model for Montana with corresponding population numbers and estimated sustainable harvest rates. Although the Inman population estimate is considered low based on research findings by Copeland et al. (2008) in Glacier National Park, wolverine harvest was considered sustainable at a more regulated level. Therefore, FWP changed trapping regulations to reflect emerging information for the 2004 season instituting 3 wolverine management units (WMU) and assigning quotas to each which reflected the current harvest level of 12 animals. Additional data from the ongoing wolverine research suggested more conservative quota levels were appropriate, so for the 2007 season quotas were adjusted to associate higher quota levels with the two large ecosystems in the state (Northern Continental Divide/WMU 1 and Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem/ WMU 3) and recognize the lower population size in

insular mountain ranges in the central portion with a reduced quota level (WMU 2). Further analysis tied to genetic make-up of the Montana wolverine population, the issue of maintaining population connectivity, and recognizing the core population areas of three major ecosystems (now including central Idaho wilderness area) led to additional regulation changes in 2008. These adjustments included delineating four WMU's with the three major ecosystems having reduced quotas for a statewide total of 5 animals and a central Montana WMU with a quota of 0 to promote population connectivity between the three major ecosystems in the state where harvest is allowed. Managing the WMU/quota system has maintained biologically sound harvest opportunity that does not jeopardize conservation of the species.

Wolverine are one of five furbearers that are required to be registered and pelt tagged so that the actual number of harvested animals is known (Table 11). The statewide wolverine harvest continues to remain stable (Fig. 27). Conservative quotas during the 2008-09 season were reflected in the harvest of 4 wolverine which was 61% below the 10-year average harvest. This restrictive quota system has achieved the management goal of redistributing and lowering the wolverine harvest in the state. Harvest of wolverine is considered independent of pelt prices (Table 10). Examining the trend in CPUE it appears harvest effort has been relatively stable to more recently declining on a statewide basis, indicating that less wolverine are being taken per unit of effort (Fig. 28).

Population monitoring for wolverine consists of analyzing harvest data and using the collection and analysis of biological data from the harvest sample through mandatory carcass turn-in from trappers. The statewide trend in wolverine using CPUE is a stable to declining trend (Fig. 28) and a comparison of wolverine CPUE with the other terrestrial species is presented in Fig 52. The harvest sample of wolverine provides a small sample size, so population parameters are more difficult to interpret. However, trend in population parameters show about .5 juveniles per adult female (Fig. 29), a mixed age structure with a continuous representation of juveniles (Fig. 30), about a 50% female sex ratio (Fig. 31), with a median age of adults higher than the median age of the total harvest (Fig. 32).

Table 11. Wolverine harvest, pelt price, and harvest quota if applicable, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

Year	TD 1	TD 2	TD 3	TD 4	TD 5	TD 6	TD 7	State	Pelt Price	Quota
1994-95	2	1	5	1	0			9		
1995-96	5	2	4	1	0			12	200.01	
1996-97	6	0	3	2	1			12		
1997-98	1	5	6	3	0			15		
1998-99	0	2	2	5	0			9		
1999-00	0	0	3	1	0			4		
2000-01	1	6	4	2	0			14	212.94	
2001-02	1	0	9	0	0			10	225.01	
2002-03	2	2	8	2	1			15	225.01	
2003-04	1	2	3	2	2			10	275.01	
2004-05	3	1	6	1	0			11	275.01	12
2005-06	0	4	4	2	1			11	300.01	12
2006-07	2	0	5	2	0			9	217.85	12
2007-08	2	1	5	1	0			9	280.35	10
2008-09	2	0	0	2	0			4	254.67	5

## Statewide Wolverine Harvest

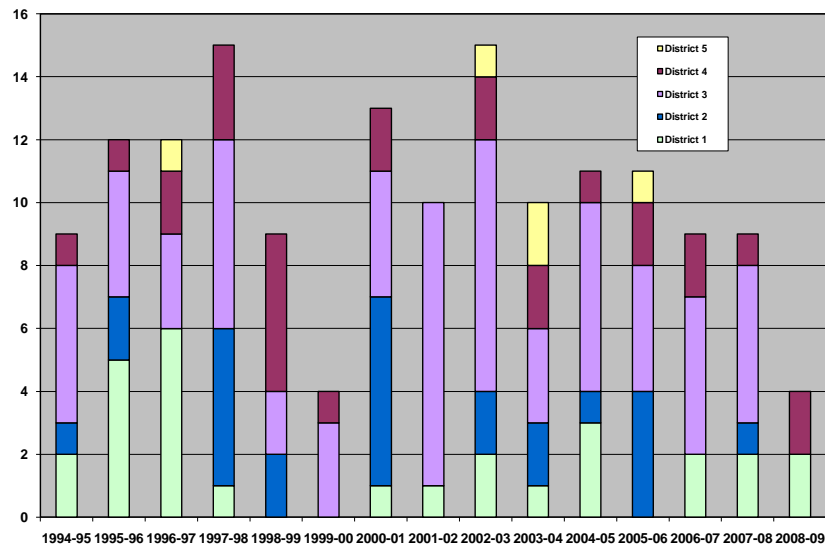


Figure 27. Statewide wolverine harvest by trapping district, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

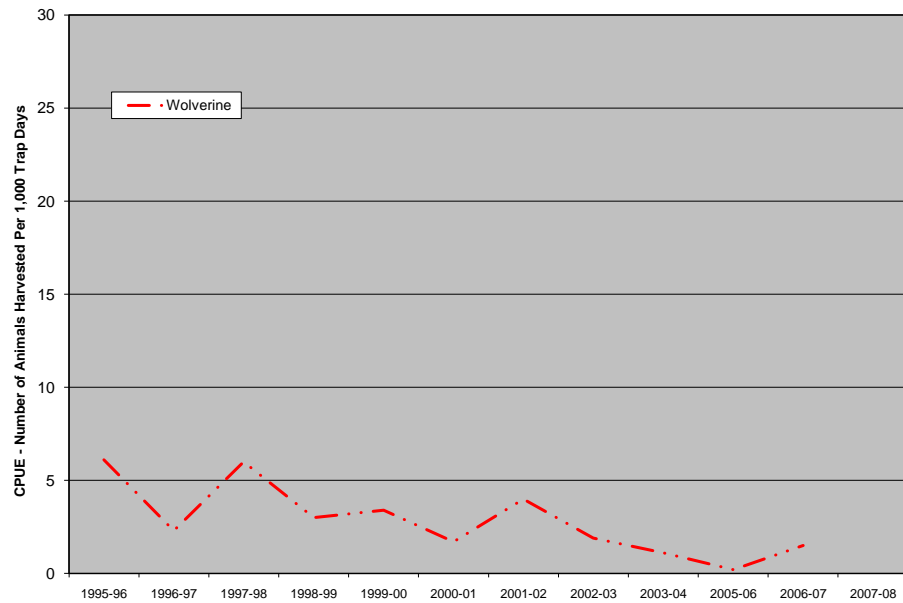


Figure 28. Statewide trend in Wolverine harvest from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.

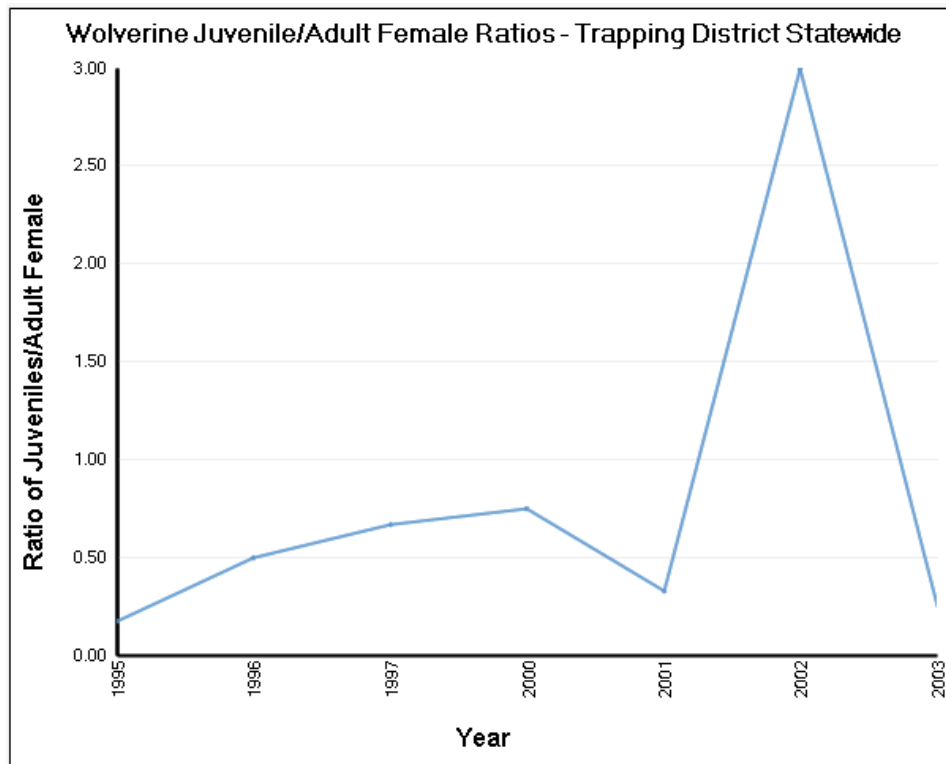


Figure 29. Wolverine population parameter of juvenile per adult female ratio.

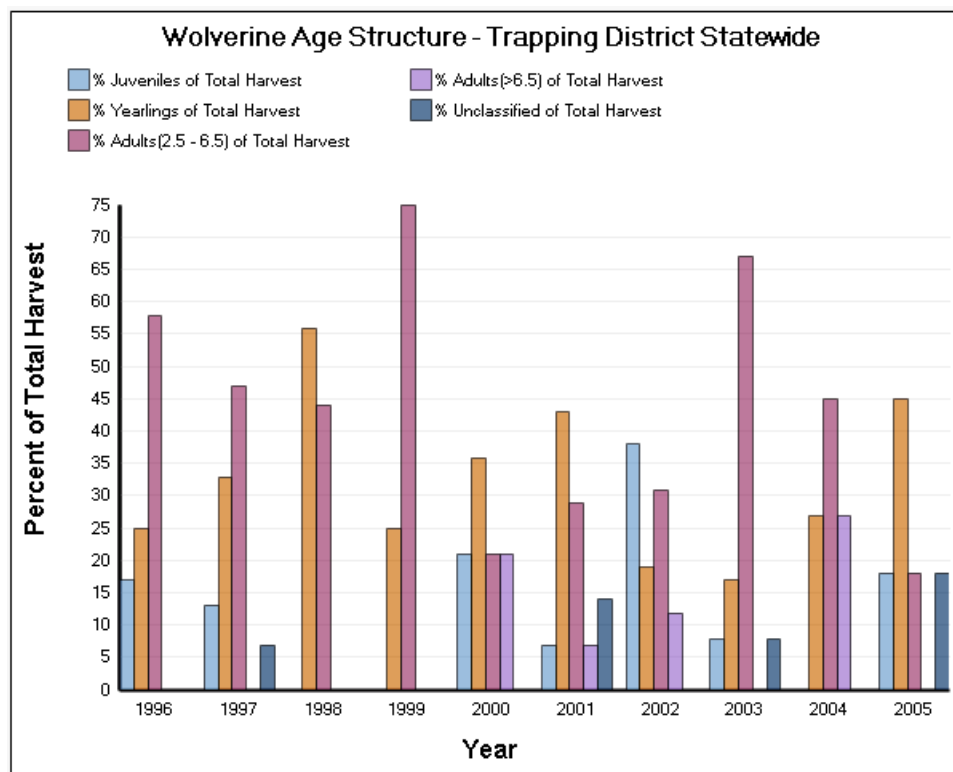


Figure 30. Wolverine population parameter of age structure.

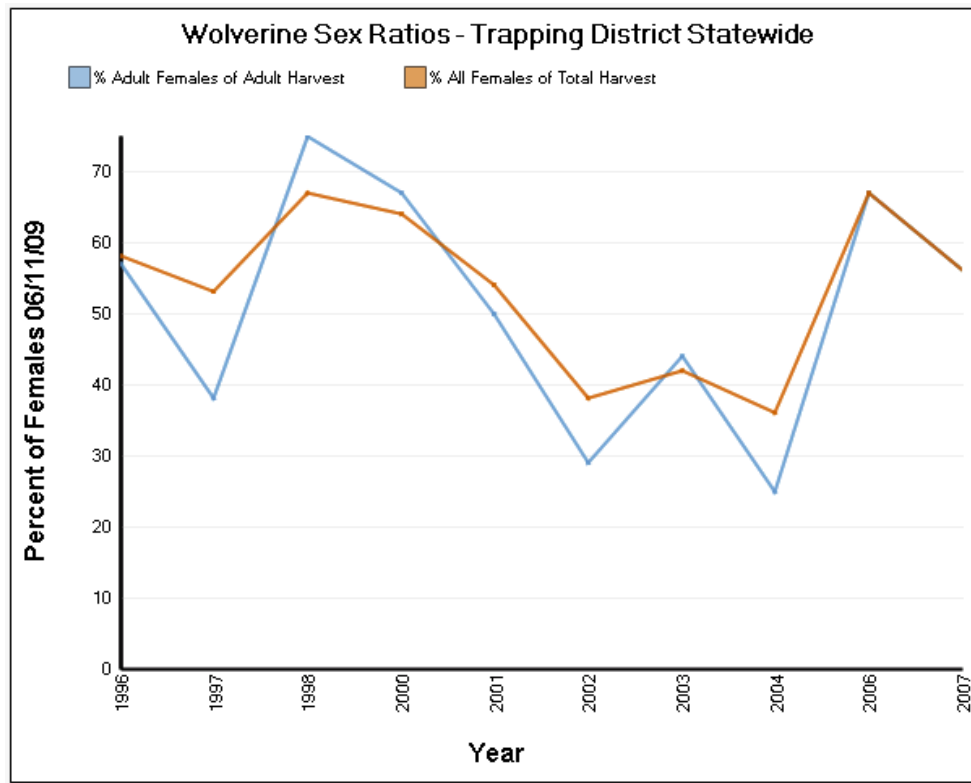


Figure 31. Wolverine population parameter of sex ratio.

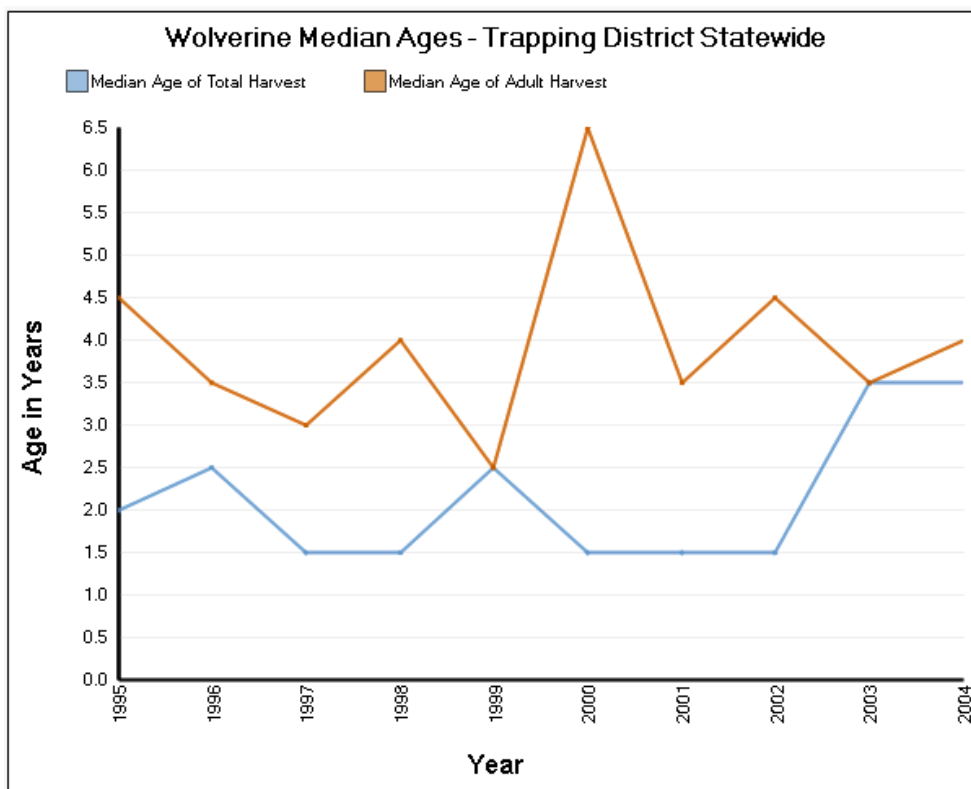


Figure 32. Wolverine population parameter of median ages.

## BOBCAT

Bobcats are one of five furbearers that are required to be registered and pelt tagged so that the actual number of harvested animals is known (Table 12). The bobcat harvest has been managed through trapping district (TD) quotas with changes in trapper limits or removal of trapper limits in some districts. In the late 1990s trapper limits were increased in response to low trapper interest in bobcats because of relatively low pelt prices (Table 12) and later removed in the eastern districts (TD 4 – 7). Trapper limits were retained in the western three TDs (TD 1-3) but have varied in limit number depending on trapper interest to distribute harvest more equitable. Bobcat quotas have been used as a management tool to maintain healthy bobcat populations while providing more opportunity and flexibility to harvest bobcat by the trapping community. As bobcat populations have increased along with trapper interest, TD quotas have increased proportionately. The statewide total quota has increased from 1,415 in 1994-95 to 2,480 in 2008-09 (Table 12) while the harvest has increased from 1,052 in 1994-95 to 2,428 in 2008-09 (Fig. 33). Pelt prices jumped dramatically beginning with the 2003-04 season, and continuing through 2008-09 (Table 12). Examining the trend in CPUE it appears harvest effort has been stable to slightly declining, indicating that fewer bobcat are being taken per unit of effort (Fig.34).

The statewide trend in bobcat using CPUE is declining slightly (Fig.34) and a comparison of bobcat CPUE with the other terrestrial species is presented in Fig 52. Population monitoring for bobcat consists of analyzing harvest data and the collection and analysis of biological data from the harvest sample through mandatory skull turn-in from trappers. Trend in population parameters show a recent decline in juveniles per adult female (Fig. 35), an increasingly older age structure (Fig. 36), less than a 50% female sex ratio (Fig. 37), and a drop in median age of the total harvest (Fig. 38). Again, these parameters indicate a stable to more recently declining population trend on a statewide basis.

Table 12. Bobcat harvest, pelt price, and harvest quota if applicable, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

Year	TD 1	TD 2	TD 3	TD 4	TD 5	TD 6	TD 7	State	Pelt Price	Quota
1994-95	148	117	121	145	157	75	289	1052	81.75	1415
1995-96	169	113	105	105	109	12	149	762	75.42	1440
1996-97	166	108	133	174	165	45	250	1041	124.05	1440
1997-98	167	158	139	163	191	40	348	1206	95.25	1490
1998-99	173	159	134	133	197	68	229	1093	85.51	1490
1999-00	199	170	145	184	212	91	410	1411	98.67	1510
2000-01	222	168	128	173	230	86	391	1398	106.05	1630
2001-02	244	178	173	177	267	121	542	1702	135.25	1730
2002-03	201	146	199	193	315	135	597	1786	203.01	1805
2003-04	210	182	229	211	356	88	507	1783	280.25	1880
2004-05	225	172	218	312	424	135	628	2114	325.01	2030
2005-06	230	158	291	287	392	122	721	2201	345.01	2255
2006-07	243	177	294	320	426	91	677	2228	257.33	2255
2007-08	264	182	314	316	489	100	724	2389	449.45	2355
2008-09	258	184	292	298	503	71	822	2428	281.35	2480



## Statewide Bobcat Harvest

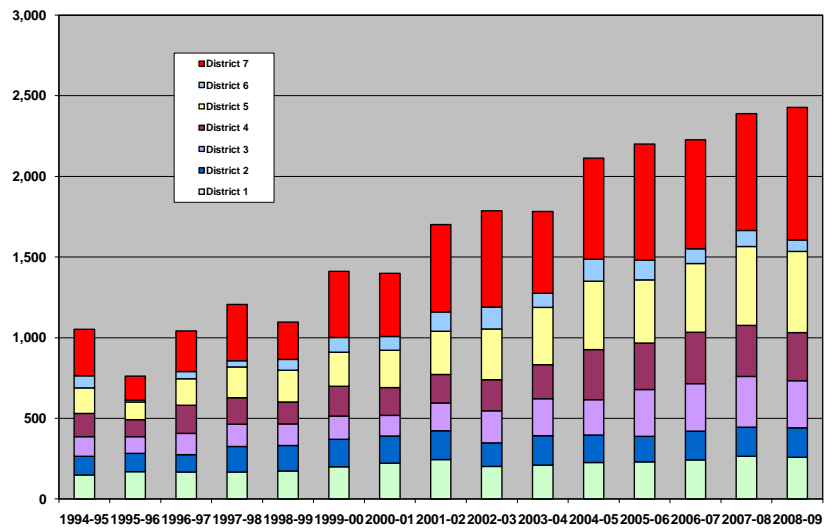


Figure 33. Statewide bobcat harvest by trapping district, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

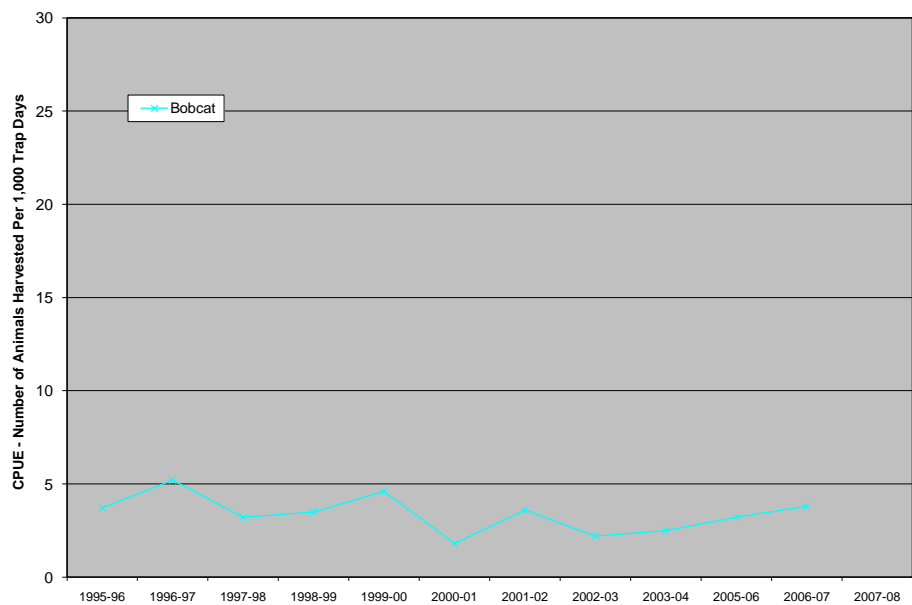


Figure 34. Statewide trend on Bobcat harvest from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.

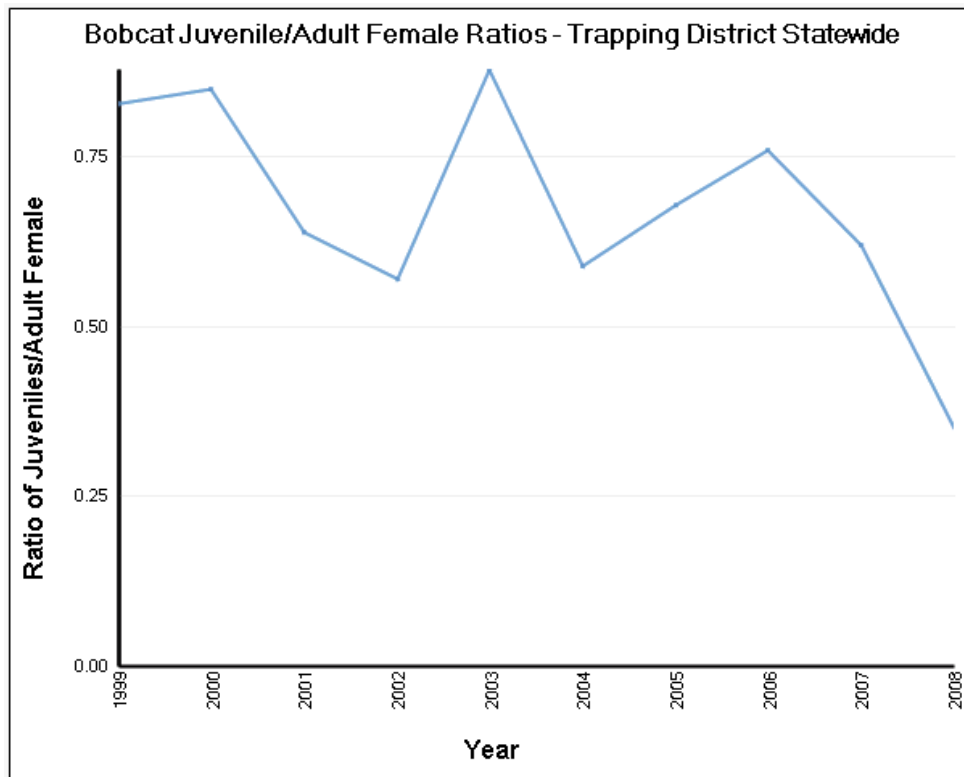


Figure 35. Bobcat population parameter of juvenile per adult female ratio.

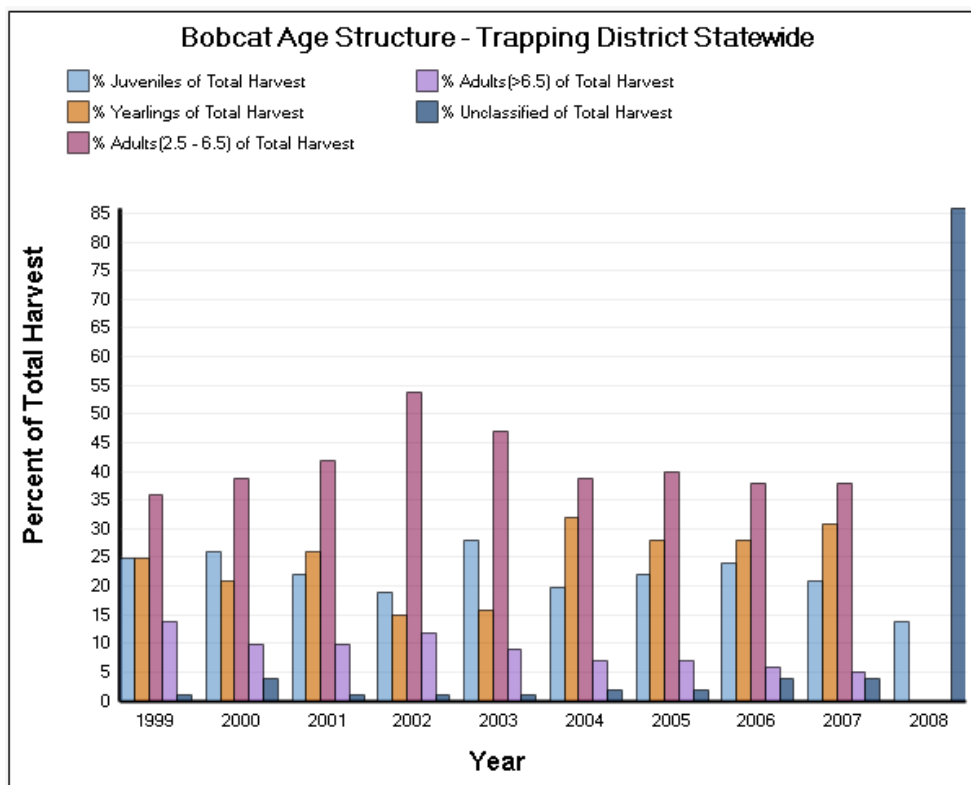


Figure 36. Bobcat population parameter of age structure.

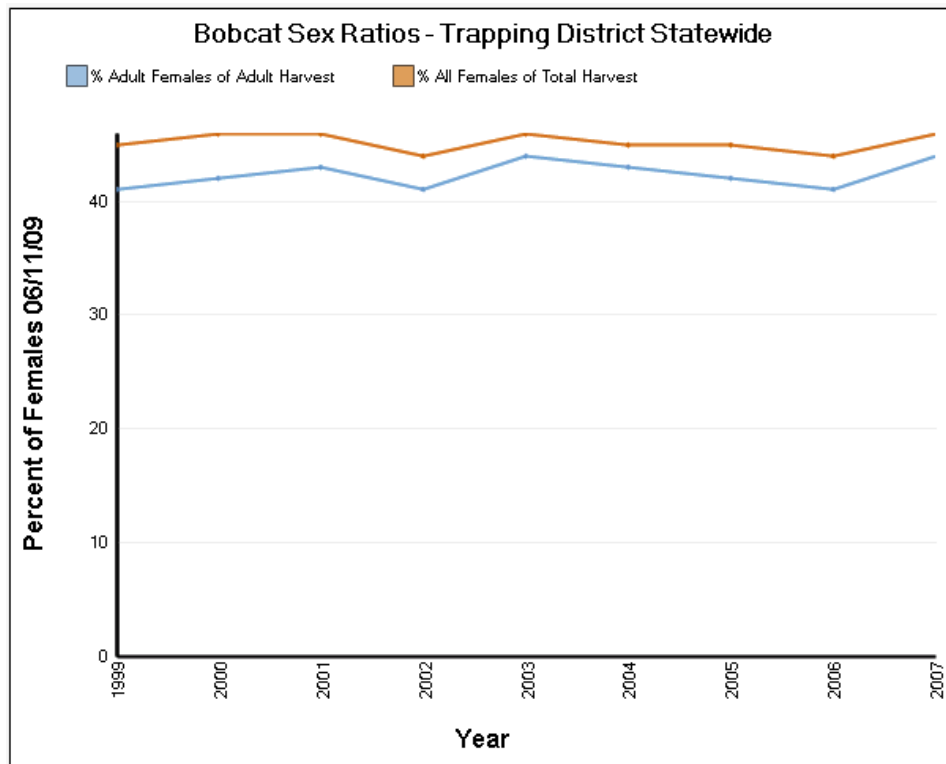


Figure 37. Bobcat population parameter of sex ratio.

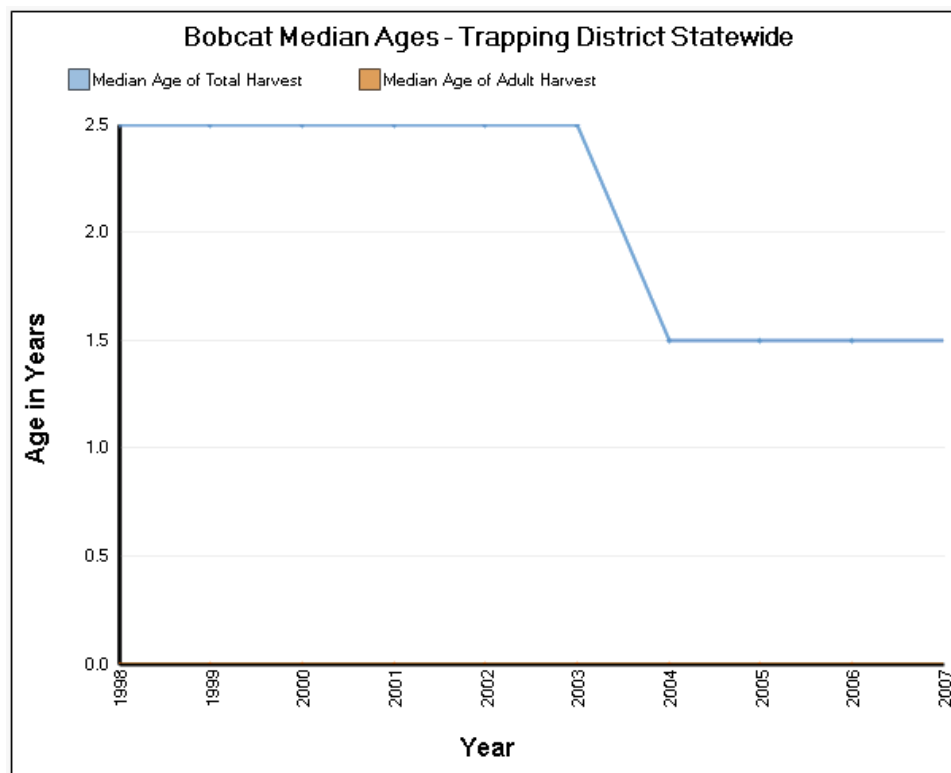


Figure 38. Bobcat population parameter of median ages.

## WEASEL

The statewide weasel harvest continues to remain relatively stable, although generally at a lower level during the past decade within a range of 200 to 500 animals with some years below or above this level (Table 13). The majority of weasel taken over most years is in northwestern Montana's trapping district (TD) 1 (Fig. 39). The estimated 2008-09 statewide harvest of 175 animals was 45% below the 10-year average harvest, despite higher pelt prices (Table 13). Despite the low harvest, average pelt prices offered for 2008-09 were the third highest during the last decade. Examining the trend in CPUE it appears harvest effort has generally decreased, indicating that fewer weasel are being taken per unit of effort (Fig.40). Population monitoring activities for weasel are based completely on harvest data, with CPUE considered to be an indicator of relative population trend, which could be considered stable to declining. The comparison of CPUE for weasel to the other classified predator species is shown in Fig. 53.

Table 13. Weasel harvest, pelt price, and harvest quota if applicable, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

Year	TD 1	TD 2	TD 3	TD 4	TD 5	TD 6	TD 7	State	Pelt Price	Quota
1994-95	286	222	161	109	5	19	0	802	2.66	
1995-96	264	53	24	0	2	0	0	343	1.75	
1996-97	217	16	154	618	8	4	79	1094	1.83	
1997-98	123	54	153	56	0	0	0	386	1.01	
1998-99	144	48	9	42	3	0	0	246		
1999-00	211	86	24	155	0	0	3	480		
2000-01	87	11	19	42	0	0	8	167	1.51	
2001-02	75	7	14	4	0	0	0	100	2.01	
2002-03	248	124	32	0	0	0	0	405	3.01	
2003-04	88	164	51	13	3	0	3	321	3.01	
2004-05									3.01	
2005-06	118	77	9	27	12	0	0	243	3.01	
2006-07	213	161	79	35	12	0	3	503	4.96	
2007-08	185	45	21	12	3	0	0	310	5.69	
2008-09	45	76	6	0	0	0	0	175	4.02	

## Statewide Weasel Harvest

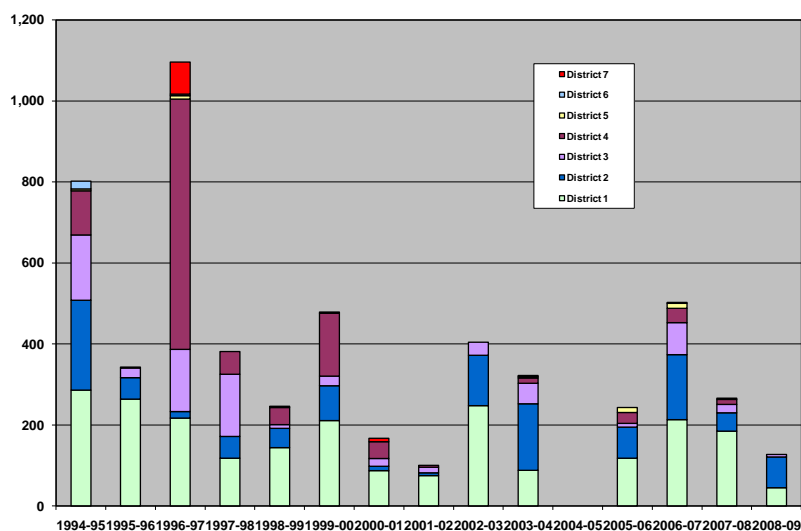


Figure 39. Statewide weasel harvest by trapping district, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

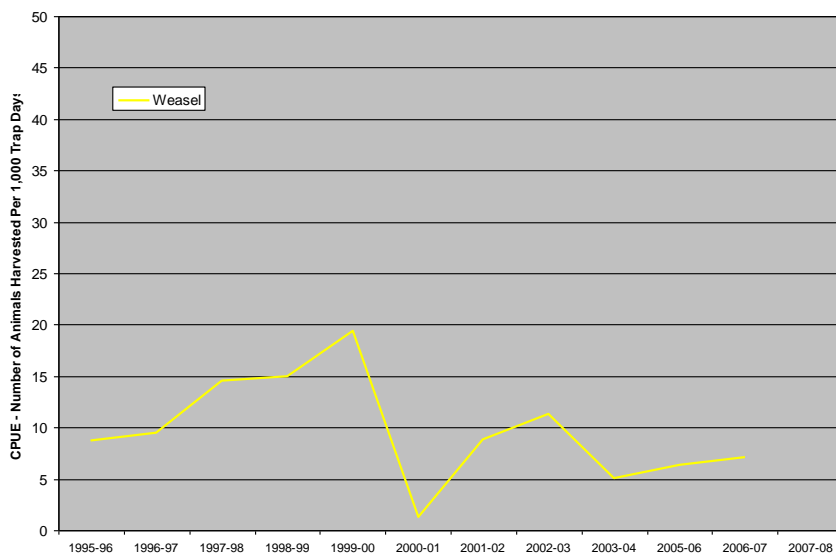


Figure 40. Statewide trend in Weasel harvest from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.

## SKUNK

The statewide skunk harvest continues to remain stable, and within a general range of 1,000 to 3,000 animals with some years below or above this level (Table 14). The majority of weasel taken over most years is in the southern half of Montana in trapping district (TD) 3, 5 and 7 (Fig. 41). The estimated 2008-09 statewide harvest of 1,845 animals was 14% below the 10-year average harvest, despite average pelt prices (Table 14). Despite a lower harvest than the previous several years, average pelt prices offered for 2008-09 were only 16% of the average over the last decade. Examining the trend in CPUE it appears harvest effort has decreased, indicating that fewer skunk are being taken per unit of effort (Fig.42). Population monitoring activities for weasel are based completely on harvest data, with CPUE considered to be an indicator of relative population trend, which could be considered to be declining. The comparison of CPUE for skunk to the other classified predator species is shown in Fig. 53.

Table 14. Skunk harvest, pelt price, and harvest quota if applicable, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

Year	TD 1	TD 2	TD 3	TD 4	TD 5	TD 6	TD 7	State	Pelt Price	Quota
1994-95	69	194	336	222	532	579	1287	3219	3.41	
1995-96	75	198	167	89	401	162	619	1784	6.15	
1996-97	142	169	638	260	705	539	929	3382	3.86	
1997-98	102	138	573	394	445	281	749	2682	2.85	
1998-99	84	246	345	342	306	15	228	1567		
1999-00	7	90	238	780	1015	0	632	2762		
2000-01	72	213	445	175	361	163	141	1570	3.73	
2001-02	46	182	578	442	71	150	146	1616	5.01	
2002-03	40	224	421	248	154	100	235	1422	7.01	
2003-04	167	177	616	397	493	937	210	2996	5.51	
2004-05									7.01	
2005-06	195	145	652	492	252	296	293	2325	6.51	
2006-07	99	187	251	503	477	44	371	1933	4.04	
2007-08	27	209	161	442	152	510	471	2599	5.27	
2008-09	48	113	180	361	643	0	299	1845	4.02	

## Statewide Skunk Harvest

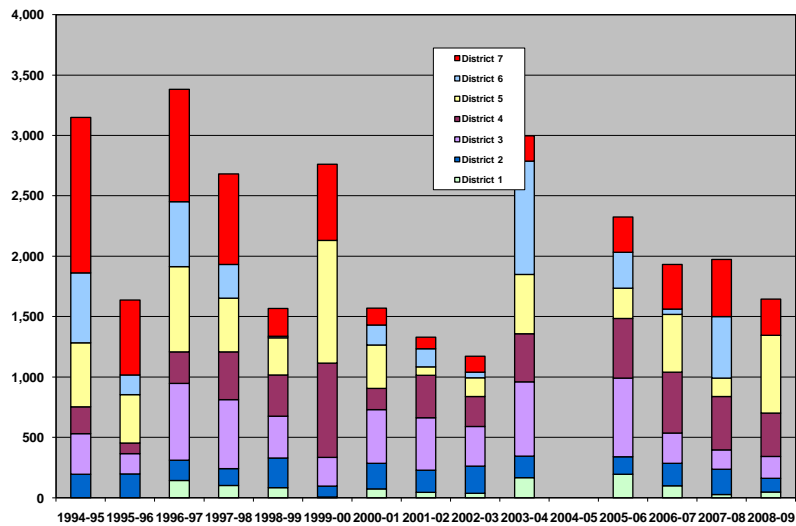


Figure 41. Statewide skunk harvest by trapping district, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

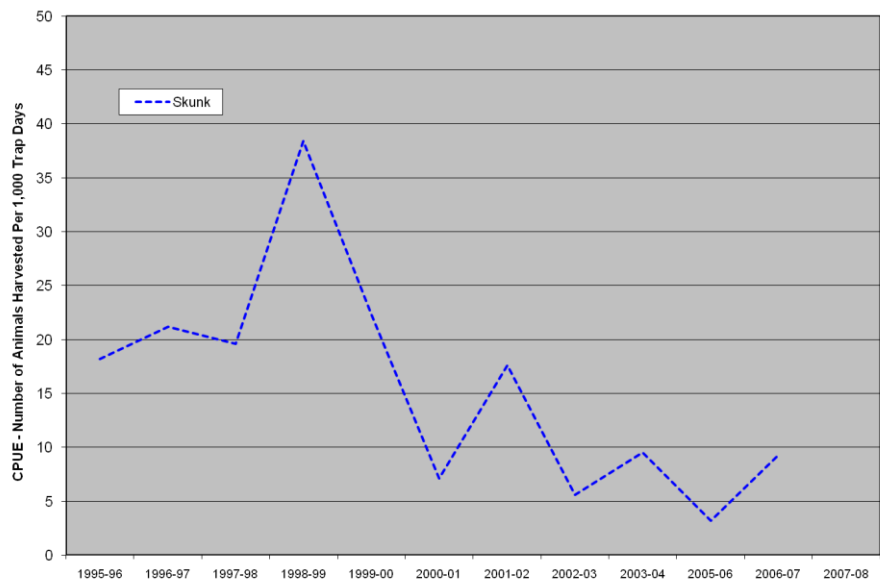


Figure 42. Statewide trend in Skunk harvest from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.

## COYOTE

The statewide coyote harvest continues to remain relatively stable, and within a general range of 6,000 to 10,000 animals with some years below or above this level (Table 15). The majority of coyote taken over most years is in northern Montana's trapping district (TD) 4 and 6 (Fig. 43). The estimated 2008-09 statewide harvest of 6,969 animals was 30% below the 10-year average harvest, despite a better than average pelt price of \$30.71 (Table 15). Despite the lower harvest, average pelt prices offered for 2008-09 were the fourth highest since 1994-95. Examining the trend in CPUE it appears harvest effort has generally decreased, indicating that fewer coyote are being taken per unit of effort (Fig.40). Population monitoring activities for coyote are based completely on harvest data, with CPUE considered to be an indicator of relative population trend, which could be considered stable to declining. The comparison of CPUE for coyote to the other classified predator species is shown in Fig. 53.

Table 15. Coyote harvest, pelt price, and harvest quota if applicable, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

Year	TD 1	TD 2	TD 3	TD 4	TD 5	TD 6	TD 7	State	Pelt Price	Quota
1994-95	284	851	1774	2112	1227	788	3034	10079	20.61	
1995-96	312	728	991	1216	1197	389	624	5495	19.46	
1996-97	189	1193	1594	2953	1445	925	1055	9354	24.68	
1997-98	524	1424	2163	2496	1493	821	1588	10510	17.15	
1998-99	267	874	1387	1486	688	453	904	6059		
1999-00	514	798	1429	3142	1526	1060	2651	11134	22.06	
2000-01	167	593	1483	1836	1563	559	2988	9303	18.93	
2001-02	114	745	2086	2211	774	1783	2004	9726	23.71	
2002-03	175	971	1452	1357	567	3386	2817	10725	30.71	
2003-04	306	1046	2311	3198	1485	1632	2309	12286	28.51	
2004-05									30.71	
2005-06	278	823	1291	1650	569	2431	2346	9412	38.51	
2006-07	433	789	1485	2269	1058	2713	2137	10886	43.36	
2007-08	197	546	1200	1716	451	2286	1946	9723	37.91	
2008-09	387	437	494	1453	494	827	1780	6969	30.71	



# Statewide Coyote Harvest

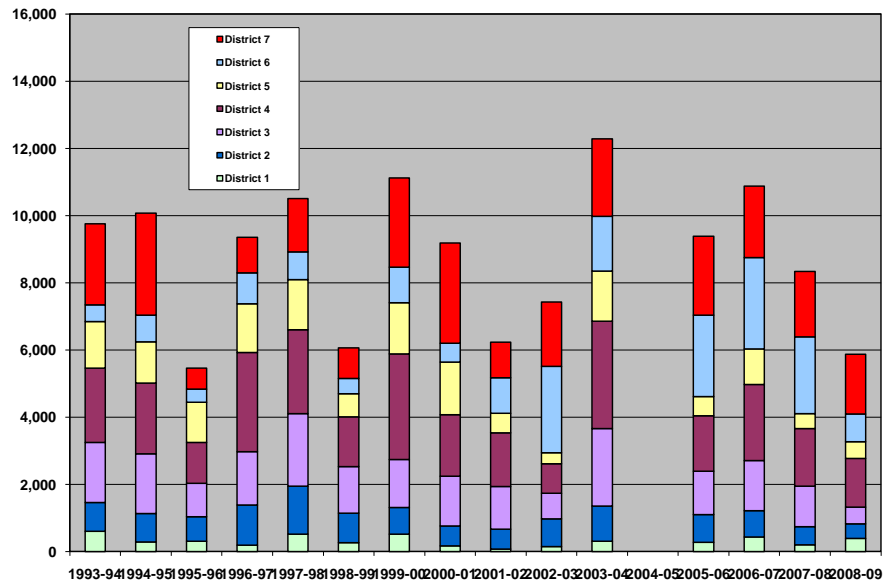


Figure 43. Statewide coyote harvest by trapping district, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

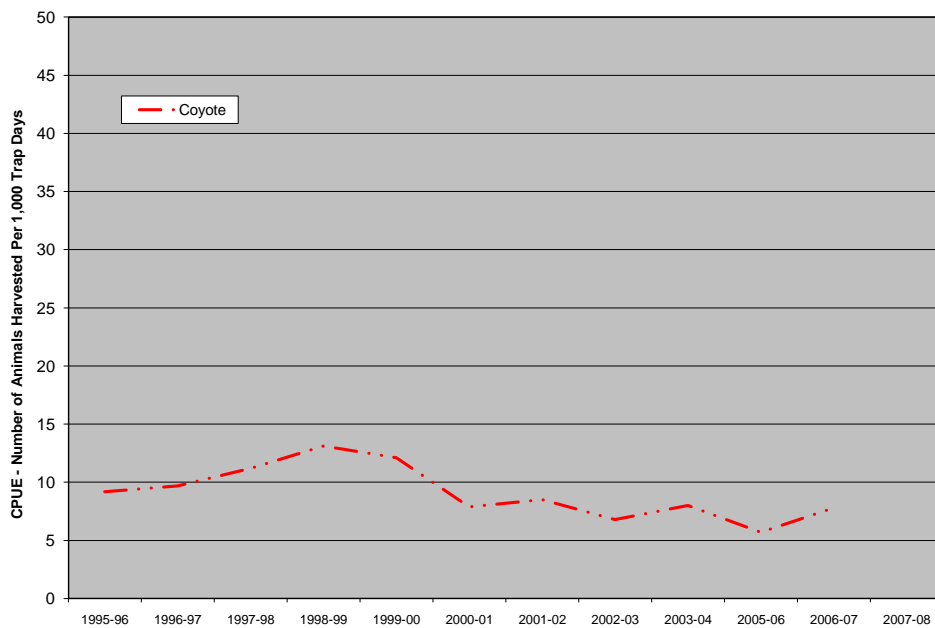


Figure 44. Statewide trend in Coyote harvest from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.

## RED FOX

The statewide fox harvest has continued to decrease, from within a range of 4,000 to 6,000 animals to an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 fox (Table 17). The majority of fox taken over most years is across all trapping districts (TD) except TD 1 (Fig. 45). The estimated 2008-09 statewide harvest of 1,695 animals was 39% below the 10-year average harvest, despite relatively good pelt prices (Table 16). The 2008-09 fox harvest was the lowest estimated harvest over the past 15 year report period. Examining the trend in CPUE it appears harvest effort has generally decreased, indicating that fewer fox are being taken per unit of effort (Fig.46). Population monitoring activities for fox are based completely on harvest data, with CPUE considered to be an indicator of relative population trend, which could be considered declining. The comparison of CPUE for fox to the other unclassified nongame species is shown in Fig. 54.

Table 16. Fox harvest, pelt price, and harvest quota if applicable, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

Year	TD 1	TD 2	TD 3	TD 4	TD 5	TD 6	TD 7	State	Pelt Price	Quota
1994-95	19	284	1133	738	2039	691	1963	6872	15.33	
1995-96	73	280	498	411	1267	181	790	3573	18.58	
1996-97	87	402	898	1795	909	677	996	5764	17.74	
1997-98	54	355	1327	795	898	307	1074	4810	12.72	
1998-99	27	210	321	495	438	129	534	2156		
1999-00	10	414	701	842	483	494	684	3629		
2000-01	19	243	521	608	293	270	240	2201	16.24	
2001-02	7	478	770	735	364	435	285	3074	22.65	
2002-03	8	483	523	380	216	364	577	2552	24.01	
2003-04	23	465	434	523	296	68	248	2056	20.01	
2004-05									21.51	
2005-06	38	358	178	509	145	569	670	2473	25.01	
2006-07	55	380	465	409	441	757	655	3164	20.84	
2007-08	45	164	248	266	227	155	277	1862	22.49	
2008-09	20	234	130	367	265	56	299	1695	21.59	

## Statewide Fox Harvest

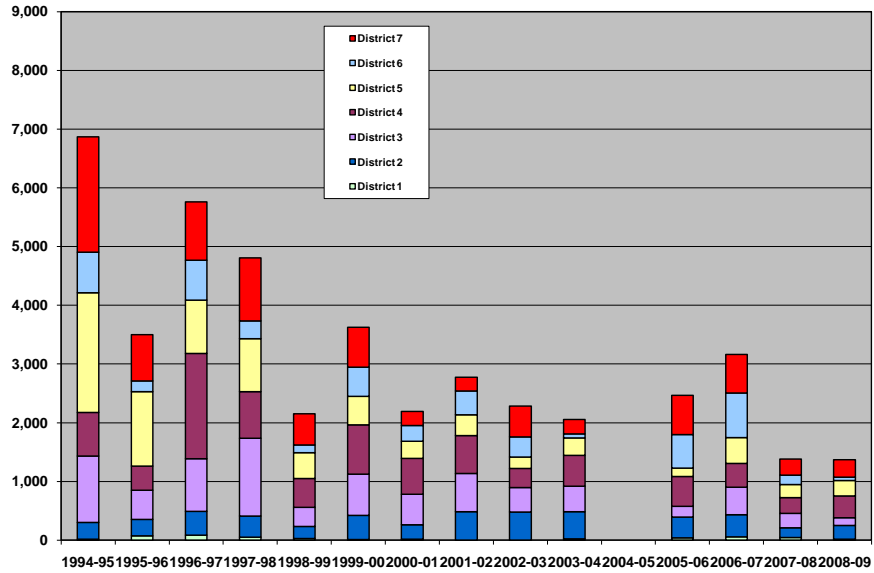


Figure 45. Statewide fox harvest by trapping district, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

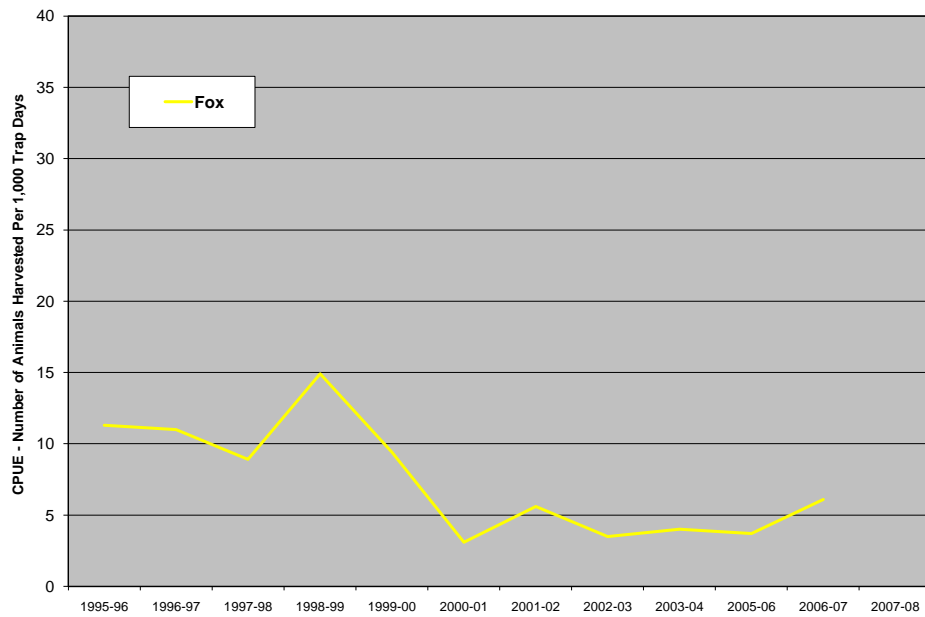


Figure 46. Statewide trend in Fox harvest from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.

## RACCOON

The statewide raccoon harvest continues to remain relatively stable, and within a general range of 4,000 to 5,000 animals with some years above this level (Table 17). The majority of raccoon taken over most years is in southern Montana's trapping districts (TD) 3, 5 and to a lesser degree 7 (Fig. 47). The estimated 2008-09 statewide harvest of 4,052 animals was 19% below the 10-year average harvest, despite a better than average pelt price of \$17.86 (Table 17). Despite the lowest harvest level in the past 15 year report period, average pelt prices offered for 2008-09 were the fourth highest since 1994-95. Examining the trend in CPUE it appears harvest effort has decreased, indicating that fewer raccoon are being taken per unit of effort (Fig. 40). Population monitoring activities for raccoon are based completely on harvest data, with CPUE considered to be an indicator of relative population trend, which could be considered as declining. The comparison of CPUE for raccoon to the other unclassified nongame species is shown in Fig. 54.

Table 17. Raccoon harvest, pelt price, and harvest quota if applicable, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

Year	TD 1	TD 2	TD 3	TD 4	TD 5	TD 6	TD 7	State	Pelt Price	Quota
1994-95	64	220	627	520	1724	272	965	4392	9.31	
1995-96	41	111	205	728	2335	471	795	4687	10.97	
1996-97	220	189	1012	1807	3547	976	1465	9216	15.26	
1997-98	61	338	1146	1422	2363	706	921	6956	14.67	
1998-99	144	198	871	736	1855	129	267	4200		
1999-00	69	200	977	908	1661	394	735	4944		
2000-01	11	205	1057	342	2091	281	399	4387	10.02	
2001-02	29	307	1484	485	1337	289	1273	5203	19.31	
2002-03	62	283	939	410	1160	380	1427	4662	11.01	
2003-04	78	258	1008	371	1869	904	1447	5936	11.51	
2004-05									11.01	
2005-06	121	154	1146	524	1125	500	814	4540	11.51	
2006-07	108	240	889	532	1517	266	816	4368	22.05	
2007-08	60	161	421	555	1277	358	651	4506	33.22	
2008-09	39	99	711	717	1343	70	307	4052	17.86	

# Statewide Raccoon Harvest

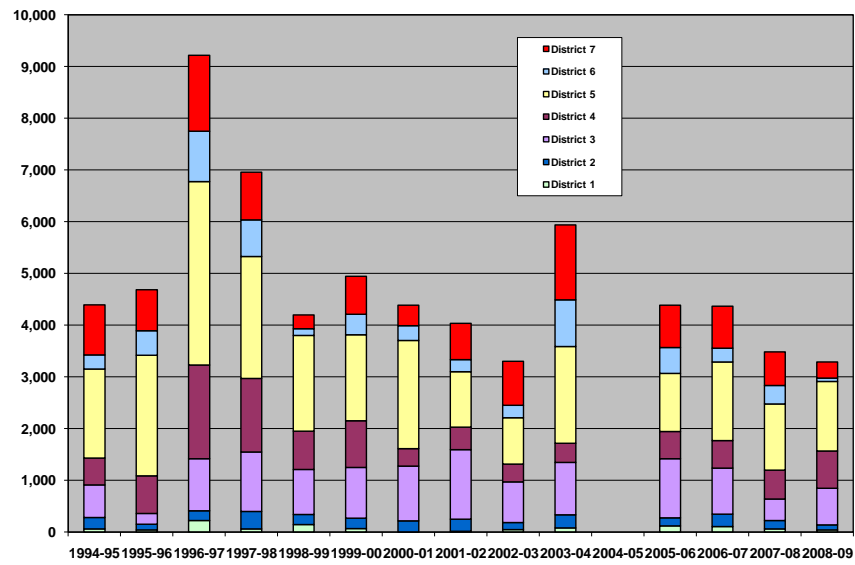


Figure 47. Statewide raccoon harvest by trapping district, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

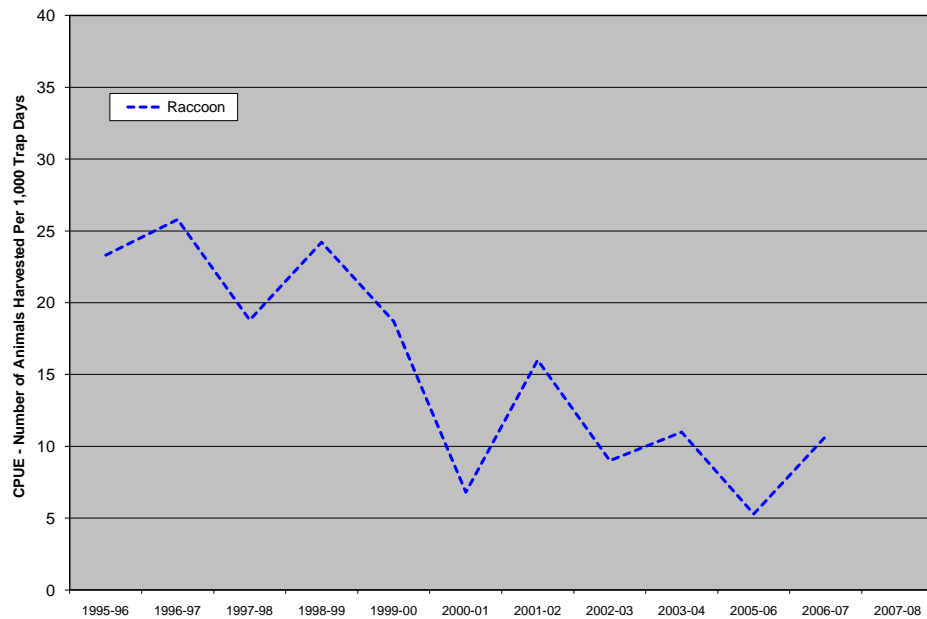


Figure 48. Statewide trend in Raccoon harvest from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.

## BADGER

The statewide badger harvest has continued to remain relatively stable with several years of peak harvest levels, and within a general range of 600 to 1,000 animals with some years below and above this level (Table 18). The majority of badger taken over most years is in north central and southeastern Montana's trapping districts (TD) 4 and 7 (Fig. 49). The estimated 2008-09 statewide harvest of 643 animals was 34% below the 10-year average harvest, despite a better than average pelt price of \$24.81 (Table 18). This low harvest follows several years of higher than average harvest levels that corresponded to high pelt prices. Examining the trend in CPUE it appears harvest effort has decreased somewhat, indicating that less badger are being taken per unit of effort (Fig. 40). Population monitoring activities for badger are based completely on harvest data, with CPUE considered to be an indicator of relative population trend, which could be considered as stable to slightly declining. The comparison of CPUE for badger to the other unclassified nongame species is shown in Fig. 54.

Table 18. Badger harvest, pelt price, and harvest quota if applicable, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

Year	TD 1	TD 2	TD 3	TD 4	TD 5	TD 6	TD 7	State	Pelt Price	Quota
1994-95	12	17	114	289	26	135	338	931	11.87	
1995-96	2	2	85	280	29	5	85	491	10.01	
1996-97	4	4	102	1260	24	157	268	1819	11.19	
1997-98	0	5	174	563	38	146	146	1071	11.73	
1998-99	0	3	51	87	9	42	69	261		
1999-00	7	3	166	400	21	41	352	991		
2000-01	8	15	114	209	30	84	38	498	15.98	
2001-02	4	4	160	360	57	82	75	742	18.51	
2002-03	13	24	229	378	27	116	224	1012	21.51	
2003-04	8	20	361	765	336	66	232	1788	23.01	
2004-05									23.51	
2005-06	3	39	187	394	122	113	308	1166	27.51	
2006-07	0	32	269	178	190	324	336	1330	27.57	
2007-08	3	27	72	173	54	95	286	871	42.61	
2008-09	0	6	42	51	25	0	169	643	24.81	

# Statewide Badger Harvest

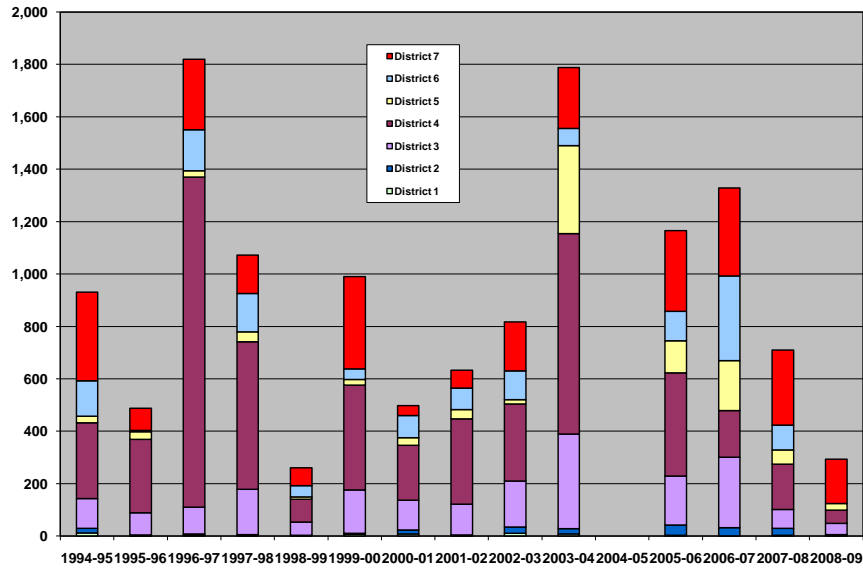


Figure 49. Statewide badger harvest by trapping district, 1994-95 to 2008-09.

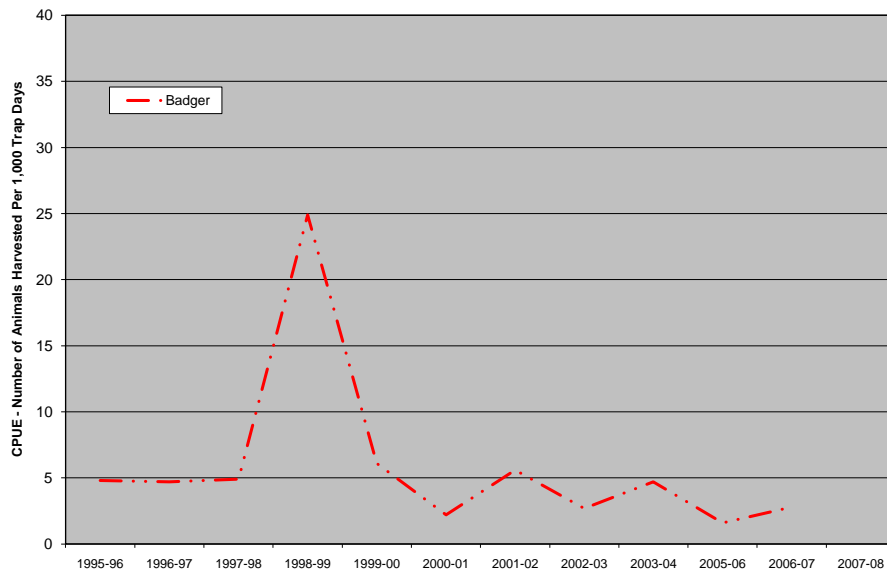
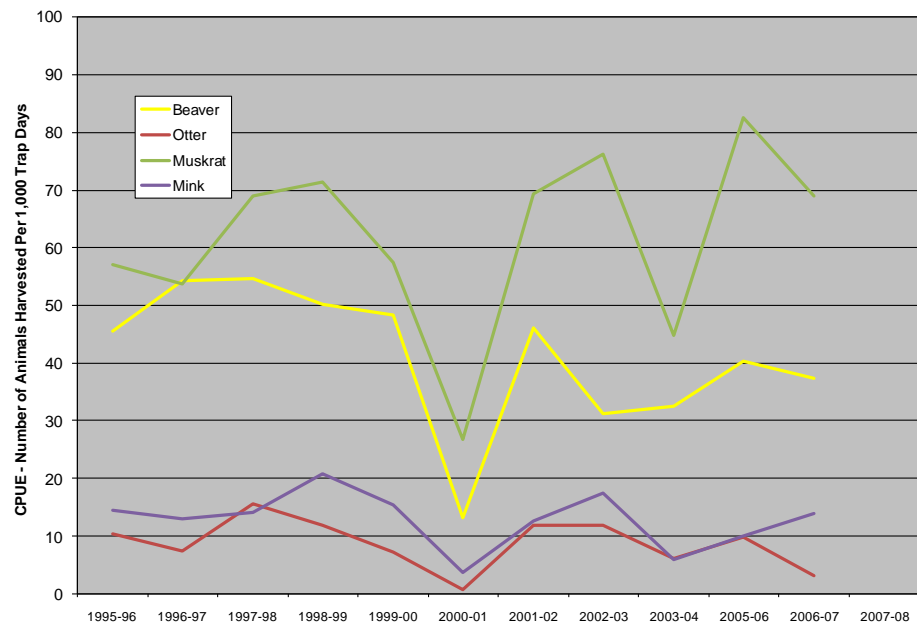
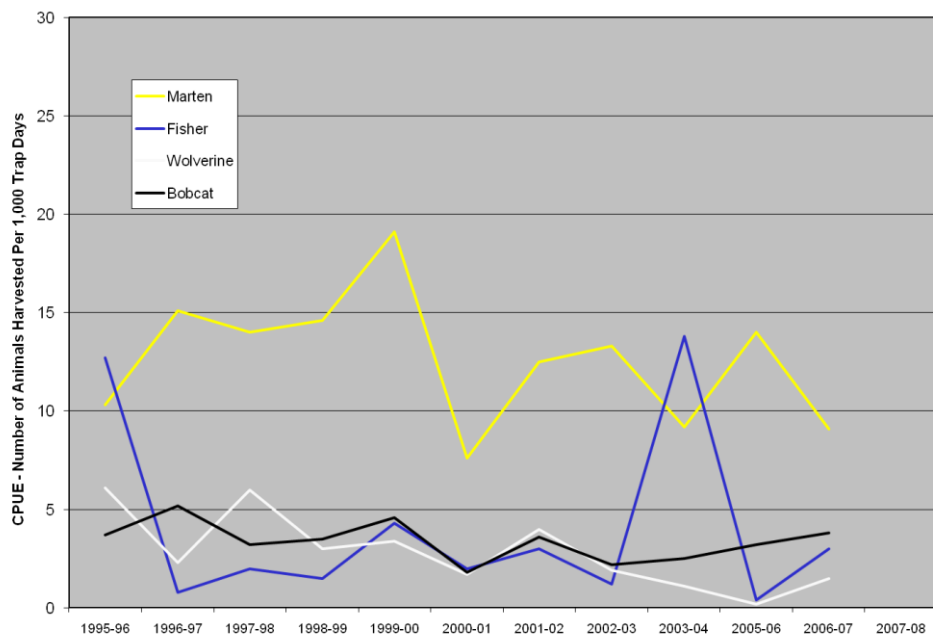


Figure 50. Statewide trend in Badger harvest from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.

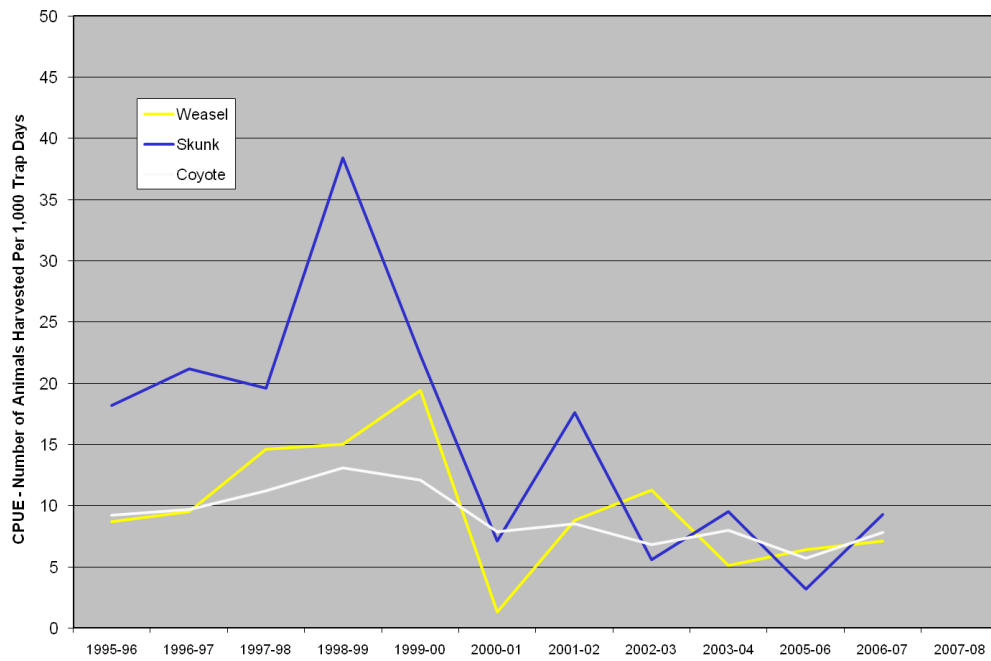


**Figure 51. Statewide harvest trend comparison of species group from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.**

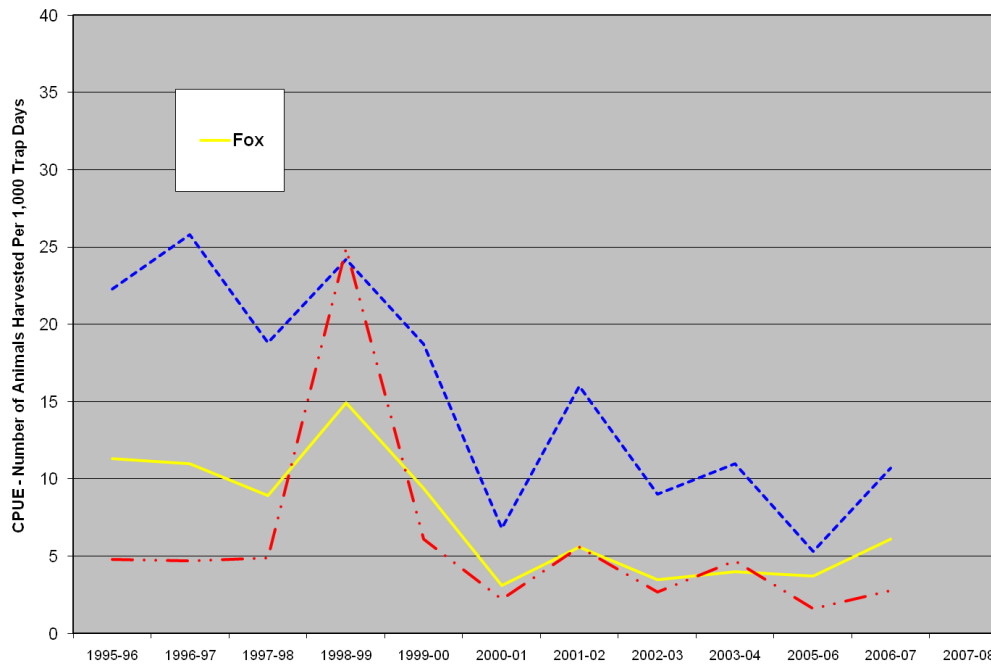


**Figure 52. Statewide harvest trend comparison of species group from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.**





**Figure 53. Statewide harvest trend comparison of species group from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.**



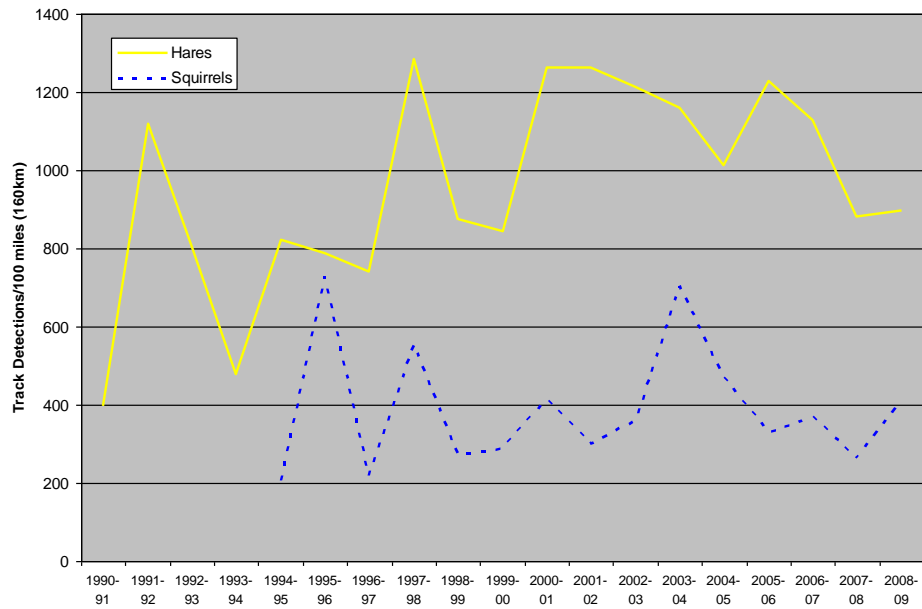
**Figure 54. Statewide harvest trend comparison of species group from CPUE, 1995-96 to 2007-08.**

Table 19. Statewide furbearer snow track survey results, NW &amp; SW Montana (TD 1-4).

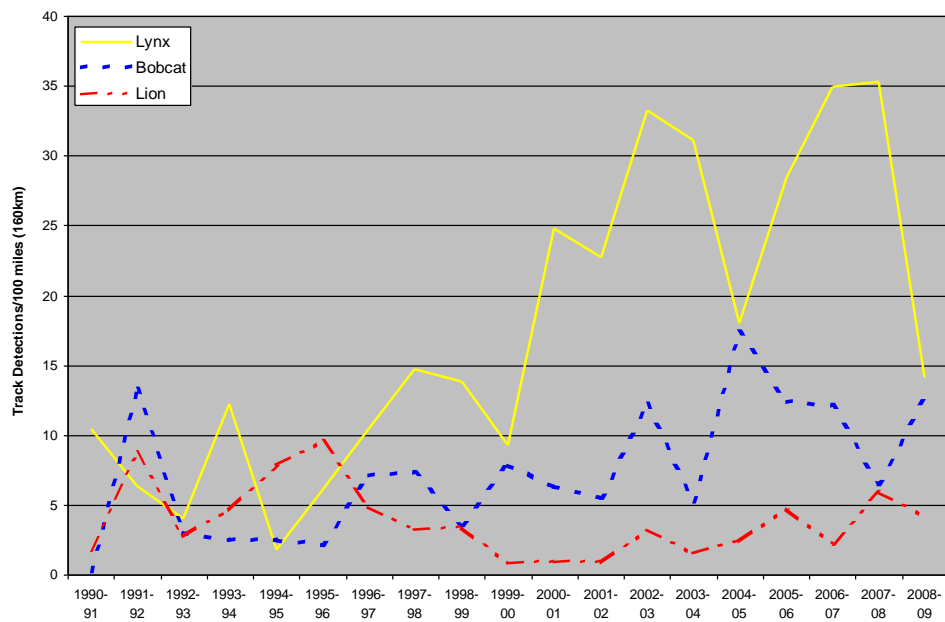
Year	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Routes	30	30	27	29	29	23	26	22	24	25
Replicates	1-3	1-3	1-3	1-3	1-3	1-3	1-3	1-3	1-3	1-3
Miles	1,232.7	1,260.0	1,042.9	966.7	922.9	544.6	718.5	637.4	746.6	689.1
Hares	10,183	15,897	13,164	11,716	10,694	5,519	8,815	7,188	6,581	6,209
Squirrels	3,478	4,380	3,142	3,462	6,496	2,548	2,355	2,360	1,970	2,802
Marten	557	777	696	363	556	173	246	262	258	305
Fisher	11	10	6	0	3	3	1	0	17	13
Wolverine	45	19	49	15	54	5	21	22	16	21
Lynx	115	313	237	321	287	98	204	223	264	100
Bobcat	96	80	58	118	49	95	89	77	49	86
Lion	10	12	10	31	14	13	34	14	44	31
Weasel	1,156	1,019	895	924	754	508	615	600	794	353
Coyote	1,290	1,059	1,165	1,007	914	895	961	820	410	760

Table 20. Statewide species track detection rates (tracks/100 miles), NW &amp; SW Montana (TD 1-4).

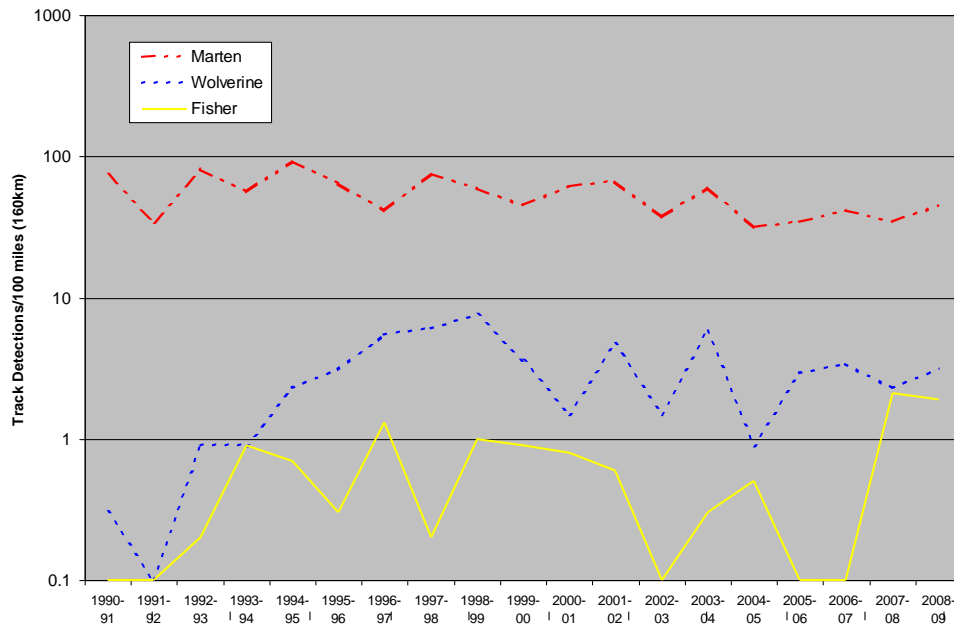
Year	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Hares	844.2	1,261.6	1,262.2	1,211.9	1,158.7	1,013.4	1,226.8	1,127.7	881.5	901.0
Squirrels	288.3	411.1	301.3	358.1	703.8	467.8	327.7	370.2	263.8	406.6
Marten	45.2	61.7	66.7	37.5	60.2	31.7	34.2	41.1	34.5	44.2
Fisher	0.9	0.8	0.6	0.0	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.0	2.3	1.8
Wolverine	3.6	1.5	4.7	1.5	5.8	0.9	2.9	3.4	2.1	3.0
Lynx	9.3	24.8	22.7	33.2	31.1	18.0	28.4	34.9	35.3	14.5
Bobcat	7.8	6.3	5.5	12.2	5.3	17.4	12.4	12.1	6.5	12.4
Lion	0.8	0.9	0.9	3.2	1.5	2.4	4.7	2.2	5.9	4.5
Weasel	93.8	95.6	85.8	95.5	81.7	93.2	85.6	94.1	54.9	51.2
Coyote	104.6	84.0	111.7	104.1	99.0	164.3	133.7	128.6	106.3	110.2



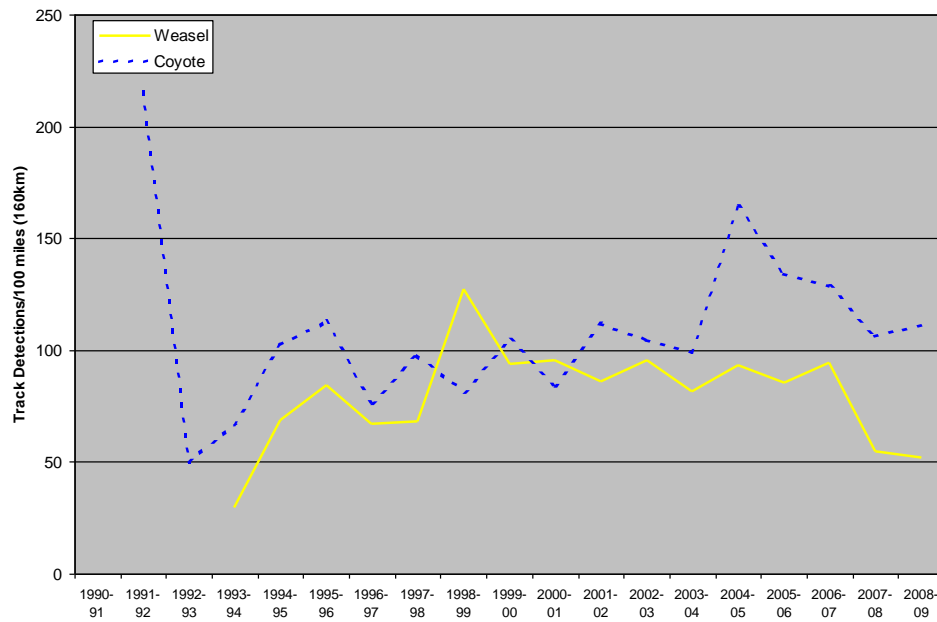
**Figure 55. Statewide (TD's 1-4) species track detection rates (tracks/100 miles), 1990-91 to 2008-09.**



**Figure 56. Statewide (TD's 1-4) species track detection rates (tracks/100 miles), 1990-91 to 2008-09.**



**Figure 57. Statewide (TD's 1-4) species track detection rates (tracks/100 miles), 1990-91 to 2008-09.**



**Figure 58. Statewide (TD's 1-4) species track detection rates (tracks/100 miles), 1990-91 to 2008-09.**

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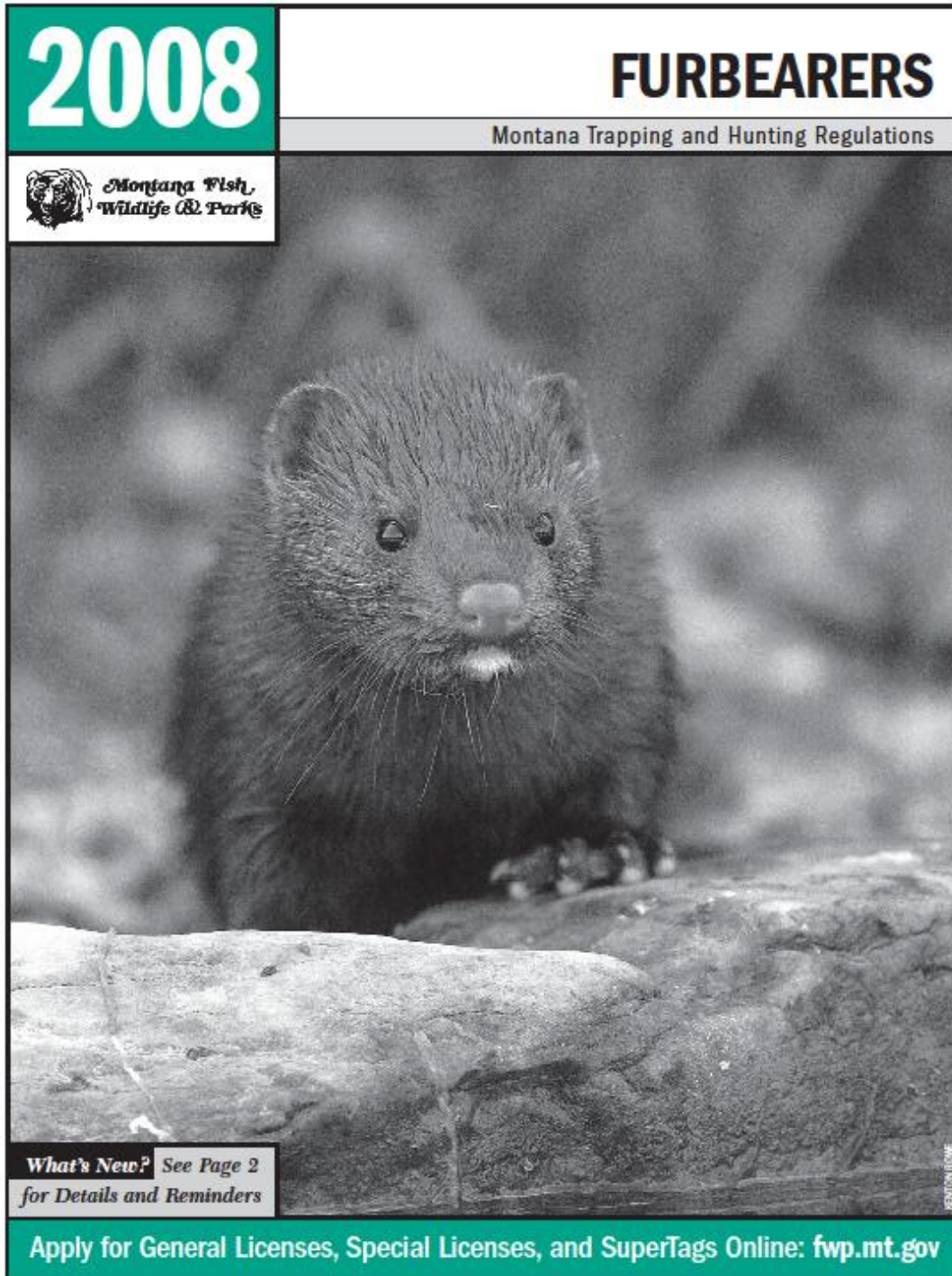
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## Attachments

### A. 2008 Furbearer Regulations.



These seasons are adopted under the authority granted to the Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission per MCA 87-1-301 and are valid July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2010. The 2008 and 2009 season regulations were adopted by the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission on August 5, 2008, and the 2008 quotas were adopted on August 5, 2008. M. Jeff Hagener, FWP Director.

### What's New and Reminders

#### What's New –

- Wolverine management unit boundary and quota changes. See pages 8 and 11.
- Public land trailhead setback. See page 3.
- Trap restrictions in portions of Trapping Districts 1 and 2. See pages 6, 7 and 8.

#### Reminders –

- Purchase Online your general trapping, hunting and/or fishing license.
- Bobcat/Wolverine validation deadline is November 30, 2008.

### License Requirements

The following licenses, except the Landowner Trapper and Fur Dealer licenses, are available at Fish, Wildlife & Parks offices and most FWP license providers throughout the state. The current years' trapper license is valid July 1 through June 30 of the following year.

License	Requirements	Cost
Conservation	Required Prerequisite	\$8 Resident \$10 Nonresident
General Trapper, Resident	Available to resident conservation license holders 12 years of age or older. Deadline to purchase license: February 28, 2009.	\$20
Youth Trapper, Resident	Available to resident conservation license holders 6 through 11 years of age. Only valid for mink and muskrat. Deadline to purchase license: February 28, 2009.	Free
Landowner Trapper, Resident	Applicant must give legal description of owned or leased land, name, address and resident ALS number. License holder restricted to trapping and hunting only on their owned property and leased lands. Issued only through FWP offices. Deadline to purchase license: February 28, 2009.	\$1
Nonresident Trapper	Available only to nonresident conservation license holders 12 years of age or older, whose state of residence has nonresident trapper licenses available to Montana trappers. Valid for predatory animals and nongame wildlife. Season Dates: October 16-April 15.	\$250
Hound Training, Resident	Available to resident conservation license holders 12 years of age or older. Deadline to purchase license: February 28, 2009.	\$5
Fur Dealer	Issued only through FWP Helena Headquarters, Law Enforcement Division.	\$10 Resident \$10 Agent \$** Nonresident

\*\*Nonresident fur dealer license cost is the same cost as a resident fur dealer license in the home state of the applicant.

**Bobcat and Wolverine License Requirements** – Bobcat and wolverine may be taken only by resident trappers or hunters that purchase a trapper license no later than November 30.

**License Requirement Exemptions** – A license is not required for resident trappers/hunters or nonresident hunters to take predatory animals and nongame wildlife.

**Resident Hound Training License (RHTL)** – Entitles license holder to use a dog or dogs to aid in pursuing mountain lions and bobcats during the hound training season from December 2 - April 14 of the following year per MCA 87-2-521. In a portion of hunting district 292 (292-02), the training season is January 1 - April 14, 2009. A person may not kill a mountain lion or bobcat with a RHTL.

### Definitions

**Furbearers** – Furbearing animals are legally defined as beaver, otter, muskrat, mink, marten, fisher, wolverine, bobcat, lynx and swift fox. ONLY MONTANA RESIDENTS MAY HUNT OR TRAP FURBEARERS, LICENSE REQUIRED.

**Predators** – Predatory animals are legally defined as coyote, weasel, skunk and civet cat (spotted skunk). LICENSE REQUIRED FOR NONRESIDENT TRAPPERS ONLY.

**Nongame Wildlife** – Any wild animal not otherwise legally classified by statute or regulation in Montana. Examples of nongame wildlife are badger, raccoon and red fox. LICENSE REQUIRED FOR NONRESIDENT TRAPPERS ONLY.

**Fur Dealer** – Any person or persons, firm company or corporation engaging in or conducting wholly or in part the business of buying or selling, trading or dealing within the State of Montana, in the skins or pelts of any animal or animals, designated by the laws of Montana as furbearing or predatory animals. If such fur dealer resides in or if his principal place of business is within the state of Montana, he shall be deemed a resident fur dealer. All other fur dealers should be deemed nonresident fur dealers.

**Ground Set** – Any trap originally set in or on the land (soil, rock, etc.). This includes any traps elevated less than 48 inches above the natural ground or snow level.

**Water Set** – Any trap originally set in or on any body of water. This shall include traps on floats in the water and those that are set with a minimum of one-third of the trap submerged. The term water set applies to traps set on beaver dams, in bank holes and in the water at bank slides. This shall not apply to temporarily standing water resulting from any cause, such as rainfall, snow, runoff or flooding.

**Other Sets** – Includes any set not defined as a ground or water set, including without limitation, elevated sets originally set 48 inches or more above natural ground or snow level.

### General Trapping Regulations

These regulations apply to trapping of furbearers, predators and nongame wildlife.

**Checking and Placing Traps** – Traps should be checked at least once every 48 hours. It is the trapper's responsibility to check his/her traps regularly. Failure to pick up traps or snares at the end of the trapping season or attending them in a manner that waste furbearing animals constitutes a misdemeanor per MCA 87-3-506.

**Landowner Permission** – Resident trappers and hunters must obtain permission of the landowner, lessee or their agent before trapping or hunting on private land. It is unlawful to set snares on private property without landowner permission per MCA 87-3-107.

Nonresidents must obtain written permission from the landowner, lessee or their agent before trapping or sharing predatory animals and nongame wildlife on private property per MCA 87-2-604.

**Trap Identification** – Metal identification tags must be fastened to all traps and snares per MCA 87-3-504. Metal tags must bear the name and address of the trapper or a personal identification number, which is the trappers date of birth and ALS number.

Tags should be attached to the end of the snare, chain or other anchoring material at the end farthest from the portion of the device which holds the animal.

Landowners who trap on their own lands and irrigation right-of-way contiguous to their land do not need to tag traps or snares.

**Exposed Carcass or Bait** – No trap or snare may be set within 30 feet of an exposed carcass or bait which is visible from above. Exposed carcass or bait is defined as the meat or viscera of a mammal, bird or fish, or any part thereof that is more than one pound in weight. Bleached bones are excluded.



**Snares** – All snares are required to be equipped with a breakaway lock device designed to release when not more than 350 lbs of force is applied. Breakaway snares must be fastened to an immovable object solidly secured to the ground. The use of drags is prohibited. Relaxing snares are allowed.

Snares must be set in a manner and at a time so as not to endanger livestock. A trapper who injures livestock in a snare is liable for damage and this constitutes a misdemeanor.

**Disturbing Traps or Trapped Animals** – It is unlawful to destroy, disturb or remove any trap, snare or trapped wildlife belonging to a trapper without permission of the owner of the trap or snare, except that from May 1 to October 1 a landowner may remove any snare from owned or leased land if such snare could endanger livestock per MCA 87-3-507.

**Non-Target Species** – Trapping or snaring of non-target species could constitute a violation of state law per MCA 87-3-101. Protected birds or mammals found in traps, uninjured shall be released on site. Trappers that accidentally trap or snare protected animals that cannot be released uninjured must immediately notify a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks employee for assistance to determine disposition and/or collection of the animal.

**Recorded or Electronic Devices** – It is unlawful to use any recorded or electrically amplified bird or animal calls, sounds or imitations of bird or animal calls or sounds to assist in the hunting, taking, killing or capturing of any wildlife except predatory animals per MCA 87-3-108.

**Export** – When transporting game, furbearers or fish between Montana and Canada, whether for commercial or noncommercial purposes, you must complete a USFWS declaration form and inspection. Contact the Wildlife Inspector, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement, Great Falls International Airport, 2800 Terminal Drive, Suite 105, Great Falls MT 59404 or phone 406-453-5790 or fax 406-453-3657.

**State School Trust Land** – A resident Conservation License allows hunters, anglers and trappers access to all legally accessible State school trust lands. However, licensed trappers are required to obtain a free Special Recreational Use License (SRUL) from the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) prior to trapping or snaring on state school trust lands. Trapping may be restricted to those state school trust lands as approved in the SRUL. For further information on how to obtain a SRUL, contact one of the following DNRC offices. The deadline to apply for a SRUL is September 30.

DNRC Headquarters  
Trust Land Management Division  
PO Box 201601  
Helena, MT 59620  
406-444-1868

Northwestern Land Office  
2250 Highway 93 North  
Kallispell MT 59901  
406-751-2240

Southwestern Land Office  
1401 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Missoula MT 59801  
406-542-4200

Central Land Office  
8001 N Montana Avenue  
Helena MT 59601  
406-444-3633

Northeastern Land Office  
USDA Building, 613 NE. Main  
Lewisburg, MT 59457  
406-538-7789

Southern Land Office  
Airport Industrial Park  
Billings MT 59101  
406-247-4400

Eastern Land Office  
321 Main Street  
Miles City MT 59301  
406-232-2034

Glasgow Unit Office  
224 Sixth Street South  
Glasgow MT 59230  
406-226-2430

**State Game Preserves, FWP Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), FWP Fishing Access Sites (FAS) and Parks** – All state game preserves are open to furbearer trapping. Wildlife Management Areas with big game winter range, unless otherwise posted are closed to public entry from the day following the end of the general deer/elk season or December 1, whichever is later, to May 15 each year, as posted (The Blackfoot-Clearwater WMA closes November 10). Trapping on Fish, Wildlife & Parks lands which includes WMA, FAS, and State Parks may be allowed by written authorization of the area manager or a department employee for land not having a resident manager. Beaver Creek Park is open to trapping only by permission obtained from the Hill County Park Board.

**Montana Stream Access Law** – This law does not apply to trapping or snaring. Trappers are required to obtain permission from the landowner to trap or snare on navigable streams and rivers between the low and high water marks.

**Tribal Lands** – Tribal governments may have adopted trapping regulations within the exterior boundaries of their respective reservations. Trappers should be aware that tribal regulations may differ from the statewide trapping regulations adopted by the Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission. Montana

tribal governments currently offer no trapping permits to nonmembers. Questions of state-tribal jurisdiction have not been resolved.

**Fish, Wildlife & Parks** will not provide CITES or state pelt tags for furbearers taken from Tribal or Indian Trust lands on reservations. Furbearers legally taken under state regulations with a Montana trapping license, during an open season, from deeded "fee" lands within the exterior boundary of a reservation may be tagged by a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks employee.

**Closures** – All National Parks, National Wildlife Refuges and Indian Trust or Tribal Trust lands are closed to trapping except as otherwise specified. For information or permits to trap on National Wildlife Refuges contact the local refuge manager.

**Littering** – A person convicted of littering while hunting, trapping, fishing or camping shall forfeit their license or privileges to hunt, trap, fish or camp within Montana for a period of one year.

**Hunter Education** – All persons born after January 1, 1985, are required to provide proof of completion of a Montana Hunter Safety and Education Course or a hunter safety course in any other state or province prior to applying for or purchasing a hunting license.

## Montana Trapper Education

Resident trappers are encouraged to participate in the voluntary trapper education program in your area or the annual Youth Trapper Camp. Contact an FWP regional office for more information.

## Furbearer Regulations

Taking of furbearers during the open season by any means other than trapping or snaring is prohibited, unless otherwise stated.

**Hunting** – Bobcat and wolverine are the only animals defined by law as furbearing animals that may be taken by hunting per MCA 87-2-601. Hunting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

**Dogs** – Dogs may be used to take bobcat per MCA 87-3-124, but no other animals defined by law as furbearing animals. Dogs may be used to hunt or chase bobcats within prescribed hunting hours and seasons.

**Harvest Data Reporting** – Trappers and hunters are required to personally provide harvest registration data for bobcat, otter, marten, fisher and wolverine at the time the pelt is presented to a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks employee for tagging.

**Return to Kill Site** – As a condition of hunting and trapping in Montana, persons may be required to return to the kill site or trap site if requested to do so by a FWP employee.

**Inspection** – Furbearers taken must be shown to FWP enforcement for inspection when requested per MCA 87-1-502.

**Closures** – In Trapping District 2 the Blue Mountain and Pattee Canyon Recreation Areas, and the Rattlesnake National Recreation Area (that portion lying outside and excluding the Rattlesnake Wilderness Area) are closed to furbearer trapping. For information or maps of these Special Recreation Areas, contact the local US Forest Service Office.

**Ground Sets Along Public Roads and Highways** – Ground sets using 7 x 7 inches and larger body-gripping traps and snares are prohibited within the right of way of county roads, state and federal highways, and interstates. Along public roads with no defined right of way then these ground sets are prohibited within thirty (30) feet from the road centerline.

Jaw spread sizes of common conibear traps:

110 - 4.5 inches	220 - 7 inches
120 - 4.5 inches	280 - 8 inches
160 - 6 inches	330 - 10 inches

**Public Land Ground Sets** – On public federal and state school trust lands, ground sets using 7 x 7 inch and larger body-gripping traps must have the trigger recessed a minimum of seven (7) inches in wood, plastic and metal enclosures or cubby that provide an opening of 52 square inches or less.

**Public Land Roads and Trails** – On public federal and state school trust lands, ground sets including snares require a 50-foot setback from along the edge of open roads and hiking trails that are designated by administrative signs or numbers.

**Public Land Trailheads** – On public federal and state school trust lands, ground sets including snares are prohibited within 300 feet and lethal ground sets and lethal snares are prohibited within 1000 feet of a designated or marked trailhead that is accessible by highway vehicle.

visit [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov)

**Public Land Campground** – On public federal and state school trust lands, ground sets including snares are prohibited within 1000 feet of a designated campground or fishing access site that is accessible by highway vehicle.

**Occupied Dwellings** – Ground sets including snares are prohibited within 1000 feet of an occupied dwelling without written notification of the occupant(s).

**Destroying Muskrat and Beaver Houses** – It is unlawful for any person to willfully destroy, open or leave open, a muskrat or beaver house. This shall not prohibit trapping in muskrat houses when authorized by the Commission per MCA 87-3-503.

**Tagged Furbearers** – A number of furbearing animals have been tagged for scientific study. If one of these animals is captured, please notify the nearest game warden or regional office of the tag number or numbers and the locality of the capture.

**Pelt Possession** – It shall be unlawful for any fur dealer or fur dealer agent to purchase or possess any untagged bobcat, otter, marten, fisher or wolverine, except those untagged furs originating outside Montana which are accompanied by an export permit or other documentation of lawful acquisition.

**Live Furbearers** – Wild furbearers captured alive must be immediately killed or released. It is unlawful for a person to possess or transport live furbearers per MCA 87-3-111. Live furbearing animals may not be possessed or transported except under the provisions of the fur farm or roadside zoo permits. It is unlawful to capture wild furbearers for fur farm stock per MCA 87-4-1014.

**Non-Target Captures** – To improve understanding of accidental dog captures in traps or snares, trappers must report such captures, excluding trapper's dog, to an FWP regional office within 48 hours of identifying the capture.

**Penalties** – Persons convicted of knowingly taking, possessing or transporting furbearers or pelts in violation of the rules or laws, shall be fined not less than \$50 or more than \$1,000, imprisoned in the county jail for not more than 6 months, or both. In addition, such person shall forfeit his privilege to hunt, fish or trap for not less than 24 months. Civil restitution from \$100 to \$500 may be assessed for each illegal animal or pelt.

### Special Regulations

Fish, Wildlife & Parks owned Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) are generally open to trapping, although special regulations apply to most WMAs. Contact the local WMA manager or the FWP regional office for information on how to obtain permission to trap on WMAs in the state. The following WMAs have special regulations in effect that require trappers to apply for a permit by September 30 to trap all or a portion of the area.

**Beckman Wildlife Management Area** – The Beckman Wildlife Management Area, Fergus County, is open to one trapper per trapping season. One trapper will be selected by a random drawing and permitted to trap furbearers and predators. Applicants should be aware that only limited populations of most furbearers exist on the WMA and that most access is by foot. No trapping will be allowed on the WMA until the end of upland game bird season. Applicants must possess a valid trapper's license to apply for this permit. Applicants must submit their name, address, phone number and ALS number by September 30 to:

Thomas Silvers, Beckman WMA  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
P.O. Box 938, Lewistown, MT 59457-0938

**Mt. Haggin Wildlife Management Area** – The Mt. Haggin WMA consists of trapping units where a quota of three (3) licensed trappers shall be permitted to trap one limit of furbearers each, including ten (10) beaver. Trappers will be selected by a random drawing. Trappers will be able to select an area to trap in the order of names drawn. The last trapper selected will be assigned the remaining trapping area. All trapping permits are valid through April 15. Trappers wishing to take predators must contact Vanna Boccadori for a trapping permit. Applicants must possess a valid trapper's license to apply for this permit. Applicants must submit their name, address, phone number and ALS number by September 30 to:

Vanna Boccadori, Mt. Haggin WMA  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
1820 Meadowlark Lane, Butte MT 59701

**Freezout Lake Wildlife Management Area** – The Freezout Lake WMA is divided into two (2) different trapping units for furbearers. One of these units consists of Pond 3 and is available for trapping to interested trappers by drawing only. Two trapping seasons are designated: fall (November 1 to December 31) and spring (January 1 to April 15). After March 15 no traps will be allowed in/on muskrat houses or hay bale nesting structures. Trappers and trapping units will be selected/assigned by random drawing. Unless supply exceeds demand, any one trapper may trap only one unit and/or

season per year. The second trapping unit consists of the main lake, Priest Lake and Ponds 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6. This second unit will be open to any/all interested trappers except those persons already holding drawn permission to trap Pond 3. Trapping, hunting and access within the waterfowl closure on the south end of the main lake is prohibited until November 20. Any part of the WMA that is open to public access is open to interested parties for the hunting and/or trapping of predators and nongame wildlife. Applicants must possess a valid trapper's license to apply. Applicants must submit their name, address, telephone number, ALS number and indicate the season for which they wish to be considered by September 30 to:

Brent Lonner, Freezout Lake WMA  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
POB 488, Fairfield MT 59436

**Canyon Ferry Wildlife Management Area** – The Canyon Ferry Wildlife Management Area is divided into two (2) trapping units with only one unit open to trapping in a given year. One trapper will be selected by a random drawing and will be notified which unit is open for trapping. Applicants should be aware that only limited populations of most furbearers exist on the WMA and that most access is by foot. No trapping will be allowed on the WMA until the end of the pheasant season. Applicants must possess a valid trapper's license to apply for this permit. Applicants must submit their name, address, phone number and ALS number by September 30 to:

Tom Carlsen, Canyon Ferry WMA  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
POB 988, Townsend MT 59644

**Upper Madison Beaver Management Area** (refer to legal description) – The Upper Madison trapping area consists of seven (7) units for beaver and otter with quotas for each species. Trapping season is November 1 through April 15 by permit only. Trapping units will be allocated based upon a random drawing of written trapper applications. Trappers may select a trapping area in the order their names are drawn. Each of the selected trappers shall be permitted to trap five (5), or ten (10) beaver depending on the trapping area assigned. The last trapper selected will be assigned the remaining trapping area. Applicants must possess a valid trapper's license to apply for this permit. Applicants must submit their name, address, phone number and ALS number by September 30 to:

Kurt Alt, Upper Madison Beaver Management Area  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
1400 South 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Bozeman, MT 59715

**Trail Creek Beaver Management Area** – The Trail Creek trapping area is described as Joseph Creek from Chief Joseph Pass to the confluence with Trail Creek and Trail Creek downstream of this confluence to the National Forest boundary. The Trail Creek trapping areas consists of one (1) unit for beaver and otter. One (1) trapper will be selected by random drawing to trap this unit. The selected trapper shall be permitted to trap five (5) beaver. Applicants must possess a valid trapper's license to apply for this permit. Applicants must submit their name, address, phone number and ALS number by September 30 to:

Vanna Boccadori, Trail Creek Beaver Management Area  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
1820 Meadowlark Lane, Butte, MT 59701

**Blackfoot-Clearwater Wildlife Management Area** – The Blackfoot-Clearwater Area is divided into two (2) trapping units (Clearwater River and Cottonwood Creek), and trapping is permitted during two (2) periods (November 1 – January 31; February 1 – April 15); with one trapper per unit and time period (4 trappers total). Trappers will be selected by random drawing. The first trapper will be asked to choose a unit and period, the second trapper drawn will be offered the remaining choices and so on. Each of the selected trappers shall be permitted to trap one limit of furbearers, including ten (10) beaver. Applicants must possess a valid trapper's license to apply for this permit. Applicants must submit their name, address, phone number and ALS number by September 30 to:

Jay Kolbe, Blackfoot-Clearwater WMA  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
3201 Spurgin Road, Missoula, MT 59801

**Lake Helena Wildlife Management Area** – The Lake Helena Wildlife Management Area consists of one (1) trapping unit. A spring trapping season is designated: January 1 to April 15. No trapping will be allowed on the area until after the waterfowl hunting season. One trapper will be permitted to trap furbearers and predators. The trapper will be selected by a random drawing. Applicants must possess a valid trapper's license to apply for this permit. Applicants must submit their name, address, phone number and ALS number by September 30 to:

Jenny Silka, Lake Helena WMA  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
930 Custer Avenue West, Helena MT 59601



**Warm Springs Wildlife Management Area** – The Warm Springs Wildlife Management Area consists of three (3) trapping units for furbearers: Warm Springs Ponds Unit, Warm Springs Hospital Ponds Unit and the Job Corps Ponds Unit. Applicants should be aware that most of the access is by foot or in some areas, nonmotorized boat. Selected trappers shall be permitted to trap one limit of furbearers each, including not more than five (5) beaver per trapping unit. Trappers may select a trapping unit in the order their names are drawn. The last trapper selected will be assigned the remaining trapping unit. Trappers wishing to take predators must contact the FWP Area Manager for a predator trapping permit. All trapping permits are valid through April 15. Applicants must possess a valid trapper's license to apply for this permit. Applicants must submit their name, address, phone number and valid trappers license number by September 30 to:

Dave Dziak, Warm Springs WMA  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Box A, Warm Springs MT 59756

## General Information

### Methods for Improving Efficiency, Selectivity and Animal Welfare

- Use pan tension devices to avoid non-target catches.
- Use extra swivels and center-mounted chains to hold more animals and reduce the chance of injuries occurring.
- Use modern positioning techniques at dirt hole sets to increase selectivity.
- Use short trap chains for most land sets and especially those targeted for fox and coyote.
- Use guarded "stop-loss" traps for muskrats in shallow water or dry land sets.
- Use dispatching methods that are quick and humane.
- Use trap sizes that are appropriate for the target species—foot pad catches are desirable for fox, coyote, raccoon, and most other animals because they cause fewer injuries.
- Use baits and lures that attract target species but not other animals.
- Use cage, box or species-specific traps near barns, outbuildings, and other locations where domestic animals may be present.
- Use common sense in choosing set locations that maximize opportunities to catch target species and minimize opportunities to catch other animals.
- Use secure methods of attaching traps—tailor methods to hold the largest species you may catch.
- Use traps with laminated jaws where the risk of non-target catches is high.
- Use discretion and select trap site placement carefully when setting body-gripping traps.
- Use time to your advantage—do not set more traps than you can handle.
- Use early morning trap checks to reduce the time an animal is held, reduce its chances of pulling out, and avoid theft of traps and animals.

### Breakaway Snares

Following is a list of commercially manufactured breakaway lock designs that meet regulation requirements to release at 350 ft/lbs. or less:

- Amberg Lock with release ferrule
- Gregerson Lock Snares
- Snare Shop N. D. Lock and Stop
- Breakaway J-Hooks
- Breakaway S-Hooks

For information on dealers of breakaway lock devices and snares, contact the FWP State Furbearer Coordinator at 406-444-0042.

## Furbearer Seasons

The state is divided into legally described trapping districts or management units designated by numbers, wherein the season dates, limits and species of furbearers which may be taken are specified.

2008 and 2009 Furbearer season Dates by Trapping District							
Species	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Beaver	Nov. 1 - Apr. 15			Sept. 1 - May 31			
Otter	Nov. 1 - Apr. 15						
Muskrat							
Mink							
Bobcat	Dec. 1 - Feb. 15			Dec. 1 - Mar. 1			
Marten	Dec. 1 - Feb. 15			Closed Season			
Fisher	Dec. 1 - Feb. 15			Closed Season			
Wolverine	Dec. 1 - Feb. 15			Closed Season			
Lynx	Closed Season						
Swift Fox							

### BEAVER –

**Trapping District 1, 2 and 3 Season Dates:** November 1 – April 15 of the following year. **Trapping District 4, 5, 6, and 7 Season Dates:** September 1 – May 31 of the following year. Exceptions include State Wildlife Management Areas and specific closures. See Special Regulations.

#### Limit – Unlimited.

Beaver that have been legally trapped can be dispatched with a firearm.

Owners and lessees of property being damaged by beaver may request a free permit to remove beaver under provisions of state law. A landowner may remove damaging beaver without a permit between June 1 - August 31. Please contact your local game warden for further information and to request a damage control permit.

A person participating in a beaver damage complaint must have in their possession the damage permit issued to the landowner (or a copy thereof) during control activities. Damaging beaver may be removed by trapping or shooting. A person may possess beaver under the damage permit.

**Closures** - All areas closed to beaver trapping are also closed to otter trapping.

**Broadwater County** – Those portions of Dry Creek, Confederate Gulch, White's Gulch, Avalanche Gulch, Eagle Creek, Crow Creek, Jenkins Creek on public land.

**Deer Lodge County** – The entire Dry Cottonwood Creek drainage.

**Gallatin County** – That portion of the Gallatin River and all of its tributaries above the Gallatin River Bridge at the Squaw Creek Ranger Station.

**Gallatin and Park Counties** – That portion of the Yellowstone River and all of its tributaries inside the Gallatin National Forest boundary above the Yellowstone River Bridge on Interstate Highway 90 at Livingston.

**Granite County** – The entire Smart Creek, Wyman Creek, Swamp Gulch Creek, and Sand Basin Creek drainages.

**Lewis and Clark County** – The Blackfoot River upstream from the mouth of Bartlett Creek including the entire Bartlett Creek drainage.

**Mineral County** – The entire Cedar Creek, Big Creek and Flatrock Creek drainages.

**Missoula and Mineral Counties** – The entire Fish Creek drainage.

**Missoula County** – Nine Mile Creek drainage above Pine Creek.

**Powell County** – The entire Pikes Peak drainage.

**Sweet Grass County** – That portion of the East Boulder River and all its tributaries from the Gallatin National Forest boundary upstream to the headwaters of the East Boulder River.

**Sweet Grass and Park Counties** – That portion of the Main Boulder River and all its tributaries from the mouth of Falls Creek upstream to the headwaters of the Main Boulder River.

**Teton County** – The entire Teton drainage including all tributaries of the South, Middle, West and North Forks of the Teton River, downstream to the National Forest boundary.

## OTTER –

**Statewide Season Dates:** November 1 – April 15 of the following year, except state Wildlife Management Areas and specific closures (See SPECIAL REGULATIONS). Season will close in 48 hours upon reaching the trapping district quota or on the season closure date, whichever occurs first.

**Limit** – A person may take and possess two (2) otter per season. The otter season on the Flathead Indian Reservation is closed to all trappers (members and nonmembers).

<b>Trapping District:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Otter Quota:</b>	21	20	36	8	4	2	4

**Closures** – All areas closed to beaver trapping are also closed to otter trapping.

**Quotas** – Current harvest quota information may be obtained by calling 1-800-711-8727, 24 hours a day or the FWP website at fwp.mt.gov. The toll free line and website are updated by 1 p.m. (MST) every day.

Furbearer seasons will close in 48 hours when a species quota is reached prior to the end of the regular season. The Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission has authorized the department to initiate a closure prior to reaching a quota or subquota when conditions or circumstances indicate the quota may be reached within the 48-hour closure notice period.

**Reporting** – Trappers are required to personally report their otter harvest within 24 hours by calling the statewide Fish, Wildlife & Parks reporting line at 1-877-FWP-WILD (1-877-397-9453) so that FWP can monitor quota levels. Trappers are required to provide: name, telephone number, ALS number, species, date of harvest, trapping district, county, specific location (legal description), and sex when reporting a furbearer harvest. When reporting a furbearer harvest, it is unlawful to subscribe to or make any statement that is materially false.

**Pelt Tagging** – Trappers are required to personally present the pelts of otter for tagging to a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) employee within ten (10) days after harvest. Trappers are required to provide harvest registration data for otter at the time the pelt is presented for tagging. Trappers unable to comply with the pelt tagging requirement due to special circumstances or the unavailability of local FWP personnel must still register their pelts within ten (10) days after harvest by contacting a regional office to make arrangements for tagging by FWP personnel. Pelts not presented or registered to FWP personnel within ten (10) days of harvest are subject to confiscation.

**Carcasses** – It is mandatory that the entire and intact carcass of all otter be turned into Fish, Wildlife & Parks in good condition, at the time the pelt is presented for tagging. The skulls will be retained by Fish, Wildlife & Parks for processing and examination and then returned to the owner if requested. Good condition is defined as fresh or frozen and securely wrapped in such a manner as to have prevented decomposition in order that all tissue samples are suitable for lab analysis. Any otter pelt that is presented for tagging without the carcass in good condition shall be subject to confiscation.

**Incidental Take** – Furbearers that are accidentally captured when the season is closed or trapper limit is met that cannot be released uninjured must notify a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks employee residing in the trapping district where the animal was taken within 24 hours to arrange collection of the animal. It is unlawful for any person to retain possession of an incidentally taken furbearer per MCA 87-1-102.

**Export** – A federal export permit is required in addition to a Montana CITES tag before the pelts of otter may be exported from the United States. For general information on federal export requirements contact: Wildlife Inspector, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement, Great Falls International Airport, 2800 Terminal Drive, Suite 105, Great Falls MT 59404 or phone (406) 453-5790 or fax (406) 453-3657.

## Recommendations to avoid incidental take of otter –

Otter inhabit rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands and ponds. If the otter season has closed, avoid trapping where otter sign is evident. Look for tracks and scat while scouting or setting an area for beaver. When placing any kind of trap along a beaver pond, avoid putting sets near the dam crossover or near the inlet of the pond. One relatively otter-safe set utilizes a castor mound on the edge of a pond. The castor scent will attract beaver while otter will generally be uninterested. Also, avoid setting near abandoned beaver lodges and bank dens. These sets are not productive for beaver, and otter will readily use them. Otter generally avoid areas where beaver are active, so make sets as close as possible to active lodges.

Size 330 body-gripping traps (Conibears) are one of the most commonly used beaver traps. The trap is also very effective for otter. With some minor alterations the 330 can be set to minimize accidental otter captures. Move the trigger as far as you can to one side of the trap and bend the trigger wires close together. You can also shorten the trigger length to four to five inches by cutting or bending the wires. Since otter are more slender than beaver, otter often glide through the trap without tripping the trigger. Beaver, which tend to be larger and slightly less agile, will likely hit the release trigger while moving through the trap.



If you use foothold traps to capture beaver, do not use them on dam crossovers, since otter often use these same areas. Castor mound sets with the trap set fairly deep are less likely to catch otter.

## MUSKRAT –

**Statewide Season Dates:** November 1 – April 15 of the following year, except state Wildlife Management Areas and specific closures (See Special Regulations).

**Limit** – Unlimited.

Traps may be set in muskrat houses provided the part removed is replaced after insertion of the trap and after removal of the trap. It is unlawful for any person to willfully destroy, leave open or partially destroy a muskrat house per MCA 87-3-503.

## MINK –

**Statewide Season Dates:** November 1 – April 15 of the following year except state Wildlife Management Areas and specific closures (See Special Regulations).

**Limit** – Unlimited.

## BOBCAT –

**Trapping District 1, 2 and 3 Season Dates:** December 1 – February 15 of the following year. **Trapping District 4, 5, 6 and 7 Season Dates:** December 1 – March 1 of the following year. License must be purchased no later than November 30. Season will close in 48 hours upon reaching the trapping district quota or on the season closure date, whichever occurs first.

**Special Bobcat Regulations in Trapping Districts 1 and 2** – To minimize the incidental capture of lynx the following special bobcat regulations apply in a portion of Trapping Districts 1 and 2. See legal description, page 10.

**Bobcat Snares** – Lethal snares are prohibited in all bobcat sets.

**Limit** – A person may possess no more than a total of seven (7) bobcats per season from Trapping Districts 1, 2 and 3 in combination. A person may take and possess four (4) bobcats per season from Trapping District 1. A person may take and possess seven (7) bobcats per season from Trapping District 2. A person may take and possess five (5) bobcats per season from Trapping District 3. A person may take and possess an unlimited number of bobcats from Trapping Districts 4, 5, 6 or 7. The bobcat season on the Flathead Indian Reservation is closed to all trappers (members and nonmembers).

<b>Trapping District:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Bobcat Quota:</b>	250	180	325	300	500	125	800

**Hunting Season** – Bobcat may be taken by hunting per MCA 87-2-601. Bobcat hunting is open each day one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset during the open season. Bobcat chasing is open each day from two (2) hours before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset in the hunting districts where mountain lion season has closed (check mountain lion closures at 1-800-385-7826). Bobcat chasing is open each day from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset in the hunting districts where mountain lion season is open. Bobcats may not be hunted or taken except during legal bobcat hunting hours. Dogs may be used to hunt and chase bobcats within prescribed seasons.

Dogs may be used to take bobcat per MCA 87-3-124, but no other animals defined by law as furbearing animals. Dogs may be used to hunt or chase bobcats within prescribed hunting hours and seasons.



Persons with a valid trapper license may legally chase bobcats during the open season and anytime after the season is closed in Trapping Districts 1, 2, 3 until February 15 or Trapping Districts 4, 5, 6, 7 until March 1. A trapper license must be purchased no later than November 30 of the current year to be valid.

Landowner permission is required to hunt on private land, including releasing dogs or chasing bobcats during the chase-only season.

**Chase-only Season – Trapping District 1, 2 and 3:** February 16 - April 14. **Trapping District 4, 5, 6 and 7:** March 2 - April 14. A trapper license must be purchased by November 30 of the current year to be valid for chasing bobcat. Bobcat chasing is open each day one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset. Dogs may be used to chase bobcats within prescribed seasons. All Wildlife Management Areas, National Wildlife Refuges and Deer, Elk and Mountain Lion Hunting District 282 are closed to the bobcat chase season.

It is prohibited for a hound handler or bobcat hunter to release dogs on a bobcat track, or allow dogs to chase a bobcat, or hold a bobcat at bay, when the season is not open to hunting or chasing bobcats.

Bobcats may not be trapped to be later released for hunting and/or chasing with dogs. Wild furbearers captured alive must be immediately killed or released. It is unlawful for a person to possess or transport wild furbearers alive per MCA 87-3-11.

**Quotas –** Current harvest quota information may be obtained by calling 1-800-711-8727, 24 hours a day or the FWP website at [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov). The toll free line and website are updated by 1 p.m. (MST) every day.

Furbearer seasons will close in 48 hours when a species quota is reached prior to the end of the regular season. The Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission has authorized the department to initiate a closure prior to reaching a quota or subquota when conditions or circumstances indicate the quota may be reached within the 48-hour closure notice period.

**Reporting –** Trappers are required to personally report their bobcat harvest within 24 hours by calling the statewide Fish, Wildlife & Parks reporting line at 1-877-FWP-WILD (1-877-397-9453) so that FWP can monitor quota levels. Trappers are required to provide: name, telephone number, ALS number, species, date of harvest, trapping district, county, specific location (legal description), and sex when reporting a furbearer harvest. When reporting a furbearer harvest, it is unlawful to subscribe to or make any statement that is materially false.

**Pelt Tagging –** Trappers are required to personally present the pelts of bobcat for tagging to a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) employee within ten (10) days after harvest. Trappers are required to provide harvest registration data for bobcat at the time the pelt is presented for tagging. Trappers unable to comply with the pelt tagging requirement due to special circumstances or the unavailability of local FWP personnel must still register their pelts within ten (10) days after harvest by contacting a regional office to make arrangements for tagging by FWP personnel. Pelts not presented or registered to FWP personnel within ten (10) days of harvest are subject to confiscation.

**Skulls –** It is mandatory that skulls of bobcat be turned into Fish, Wildlife & Parks in good condition, at the time the pelt is presented for tagging. The skulls will be retained by Fish, Wildlife & Parks for processing and examination. Skulls may be returned if indicated by trapper during harvest registration. The trapper is required to pay return delivery shipping costs per invoice from shipper. Good condition is defined as fresh or frozen and securely wrapped in such a manner as to have prevented decomposition in order that all tissue samples are suitable for lab analysis.

Trappers are requested to be able to identify or have skulls sorted by sex for bobcat before presenting them to FWP personnel.

**Incidental Take –** Furbearers that are accidentally captured when the season is closed or trapper limit is met that cannot be released uninjured must notify a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks employee residing in the trapping district where the animal was taken within 24 hours to arrange collection of the animal. It is unlawful for any person to retain possession of an incidentally taken furbearer per MCA 87-1-102.

**Export –** A federal export permit is required in addition to a Montana CITES tag before the pelts of bobcat may be exported from the United States. For general information on federal export requirements contact: Wildlife Inspector, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement, Great Falls International Airport, 2800 Terminal Drive, Suite 105, Great Falls MT 59404 or phone 406-453-5790 or fax 406-453-3657.

## MARTEN –

**Trapping District 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 Season Dates:** December 1 – February 15 of the following year.

Special Marten Regulations in Trapping Districts 1 and 2 – To minimize the incidental capture of lynx the following special marten regulations apply in a portion of Trapping Districts 1 and 2. See legal description, page 10.

**Leaning Pole Sets –** Pole diameter must be no larger than 4 inches for pole sets with trap and bait 48 inches above the ground.

**Limit –** Unlimited.

**Pelt Tagging –** Trappers are required to personally present the pelts of marten for tagging to a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) employee within ten (10) days after the close of the season. Trappers are required to provide harvest registration data for marten at the time the pelt is presented for tagging. Trappers unable to comply with the pelt tagging requirement due to special circumstances or the unavailability of local FWP personnel must still register their pelts within ten (10) days after the season closes by contacting a regional office to make arrangements for tagging by FWP personnel. Pelts not presented or registered to FWP personnel within ten (10) days after the end of the season are subject to confiscation.

**Skulls – Marten skulls will not be collected.**

## FISHER –

**Trapping District 1 and 2 Season Dates:** December 1 – February 15 of the following year. Season will close in 48 hours upon reaching the trapping district quota or on the season closure date, whichever occurs first.

Special Fisher Regulations in Trapping Districts 1 and 2 – To minimize the incidental capture of lynx the following special fisher regulations apply in a portion of Trapping Districts 1 and 2. See legal description, page 10.

**Leaning Pole Sets –** Pole diameter must be no larger than 4 inches for pole sets with trap and bait 48 inches above the ground.

**Limit –** A person may take and possess one (1) fisher per season.

**Fisher Quota –** Trapping District 1 has a quota of two (2) fisher. Trapping District 2 has a quota of five (5) fisher.

**Quotas –** Current harvest quota information may be obtained by calling 1-800-711-8727, 24 hours a day or the FWP website at [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov). The toll free line and website are updated by 1 p.m. (MST) every day.

Furbearer seasons will close in 48 hours when a species quota is reached prior to the end of the regular season. The Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission has authorized the department to initiate a closure prior to reaching a quota or subquota when conditions or circumstances indicate the quota may be reached within the 48-hour closure notice period.

**Reporting –** Trappers are required to personally report their fisher harvest within 24 hours by calling the statewide Fish, Wildlife & Parks reporting line at 1-877-FWP-WILD (1-877-397-9453) so that FWP can monitor quota levels. Trappers are required to provide: name, telephone number, ALS number, species, date of harvest, trapping district, county, specific location (legal description), and sex when reporting a furbearer harvest. When reporting a furbearer harvest, it is unlawful to subscribe to or make any statement that is materially false.

**Pelt Tagging –** Trappers are required to personally present the pelts of fisher for tagging to a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) employee within ten (10) days after harvest. Trappers are required to provide harvest registration data for fisher at the time the pelt is presented for tagging. Trappers unable to comply with the pelt tagging requirement due to special circumstances or the unavailability of local FWP personnel must still register their pelts within ten (10) days after harvest by contacting a regional office to make arrangements for tagging by FWP personnel. Pelts not presented or registered to FWP personnel within ten (10) days of harvest are subject to confiscation.

**Carcasses –** It is mandatory that the entire and intact carcass of all fisher be turned into Fish, Wildlife & Parks in good condition, at the time the pelt is presented for tagging. The skulls will be retained by Fish, Wildlife & Parks for processing and examination and then returned to the owner if requested. Good condition is defined as fresh or frozen and securely wrapped in such a manner as to have prevented decomposition in order that all tissue samples are suitable for lab analysis. Any fisher pelt that is presented for tagging without the carcass in good condition shall be subject to confiscation.

**Incidental Take –** Furbearers that are accidentally captured when the season is closed or trapper limit is met that cannot be released uninjured must notify a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks employee residing in the trapping district where the animal was taken within 24 hours to arrange collection of the animal. It is unlawful for any person to retain possession of an incidentally taken furbearer per MCA 87-1-102.

## WOLVERINE –

**Wolverine Management Unit (WMU) 1, 2 and 3 Season Dates:** December 1 – February 15 of the following year. License must be purchased no later than November 30. Season will close in 48 hours upon reaching the WMU quota or on the season closure date, whichever occurs first. Refer to Legal Descriptions for WMU boundaries.

See WMU legal descriptions page 11.

- WMU 1 (Northern Core)** – Portions of Trapping Districts 1, 2, and 4.
- WMU 2 (Central Core)** – Portions of Trapping Districts 2, and 3.
- WMU 3 (Southern Core)** – Portions of Trapping Districts 3, and 5.
- WMU 4 (Central Insular Mountains)** – Portions of Trapping Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

**Special Wolverine Regulations in Trapping Districts 1 and 2** – To minimize the incidental capture of lynx the following special wolverine regulations apply in a portion of Trapping Districts 1 and 2. See legal description, page 10.

**Leaning Pole Sets** – Pole diameter must be no larger than 4 inches for pole sets with trap and bait 48 inches above the ground.

**Limit** – A person may take and possess one (1) wolverine per season.

### Wolverine Quota –

WMU 1 has a quota of three (3) wolverine with a female subquota of 1.

WMU 2 has a quota of one (1) wolverine.

WMU 3 has a quota of one (1) wolverine.

WMU 4 has a quota of zero (0) wolverine.

**Quotas** – Current harvest quota information may be obtained by calling 1-800-711-8727, 24 hours a day or the FWP website at [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov). The toll free line and website are updated by 1 p.m. (MST) every day.

**Furbearer seasons will close** in 48 hours when a species quota or subquota is reached prior to the end of the regular season. The Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission has authorized the department to initiate a closure prior to reaching a quota or subquota when conditions or circumstances indicate the quota may be reached within the 48-hour closure notice period.

**Reporting** – Trappers are required to personally report their wolverine harvest within 24 hours by calling the statewide Fish, Wildlife & Parks reporting line at 1-877-FWP-WILD (1-877-397-9453) so that FWP can monitor quota levels. Trappers are required to provide: name, telephone number, ALS number, species, date of harvest, trapping district, county, specific location (legal description), and sex when reporting a furbearer harvest. When reporting a furbearer harvest, it is unlawful to subscribe to or make any statement that is materially false.

**Pelt Tagging** – Trappers are required to personally present the pelts of wolverine for tagging to a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) employee within ten (10) days after harvest. Trappers unable to comply with the pelt tagging requirement due to special circumstances or the unavailability of local FWP personnel must still register their pelts within ten (10) days after harvest by contacting a regional office to make arrangements for tagging by FWP personnel. Pelts not presented or registered to FWP personnel within ten (10) days of harvest are subject to confiscation.

**Carcasses** – It is mandatory that the entire and intact carcass of all wolverine be turned into Fish, Wildlife & Parks in good condition, at the time the pelt is presented for tagging. The skull will be retained by Fish, Wildlife & Parks for processing and examination and then returned to the owner if desired. Good condition is defined as fresh or frozen and securely wrapped in such a manner as to have prevented decomposition in order that all tissue samples are suitable for lab analysis. Any wolverine pelt that is presented for tagging without the carcass in good condition shall be subject to confiscation.

**Incidental Take** – Furbearers that are accidentally captured when the season is closed or trapper limit is met that cannot be released uninjured must notify a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks employee residing in the trapping district where the animal was taken within 24 hours to arrange collection of the animal. It is unlawful for any person to retain possession of an incidentally taken furbearer per MCA 87-1-102.

### SWIFT FOX – CLOSED SEASON.

**Incidental Take** – Furbearers that are accidentally captured when the season is closed or trapper limit is met that cannot be released uninjured must notify a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks employee residing in the trapping district where the animal was taken within 24 hours to arrange collection of the animal. It is unlawful for any person to retain possession of an incidentally taken furbearer per MCA 87-1-102.

## LYNX – CLOSED SEASON.

Lynx are protected by federal law under the Endangered Species Act.

Avoid placing sets that might attract lynx.

Accidentally trapped lynx that are uninjured must be released immediately and the incident must be reported to a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks employee within five (5) days of release.

**Incidental Take** – Furbearers that are accidentally captured when the season is closed or trapper limit is met that cannot be released uninjured must notify a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks employee residing in the trapping district where the animal was taken within 24 hours to arrange collection of the animal. It is unlawful for any person to retain possession of an incidentally taken furbearer per MCA 87-1-102.

## Report Gray Wolf Sightings

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks requests that trappers report any sightings or wolf sign. FWP can help with ideas on how to decrease the chances of incidentally trapping a wolf.

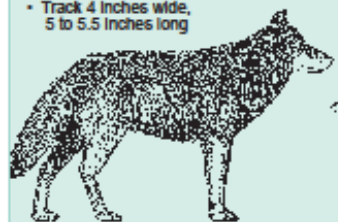
If you incidentally catch a wolf, contact the nearest FWP Regional Office or one of the following FWP Wolf Specialists. Information provided by trappers and hunters will aid in the management of wolves.

Helena – 461-0587	Butte – 425-3355
Bozeman – 581-3664	Kalispell – 250-5047
Bozeman – 581-3281	Missoula – 865-0017

For more information, or to report wolf sign, go to FWP's website at: [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov) and click on Montana Wolf Management.

### WOLF

- 2.5 feet tall
- 5-6 feet long
- 70-120 pounds
- Broad snout
- Round ears
- Color light gray to black
- Long, low howl
- Track 4 inches wide, 5 to 5.5 inches long



### COYOTE

- 1.5 feet tall
- 4 feet long
- 30-40 pounds
- Narrow snout
- Pointed ears
- Color light gray to brown
- Track 2 inches wide, 2 to 2.5 inches long



Recommendations to minimize accidental capture of wolves.

When setting coyote traps, snares or other furbearer traps, scout the area for wolf sign. Wolves travel great distances daily, but recent and common sign in an area may mean the wolves are there for a reason. Avoid catching wolves by avoiding recent wolf activity. If you are trapping where wolves have been, here are some tips to help minimize damage to or loss of traps.

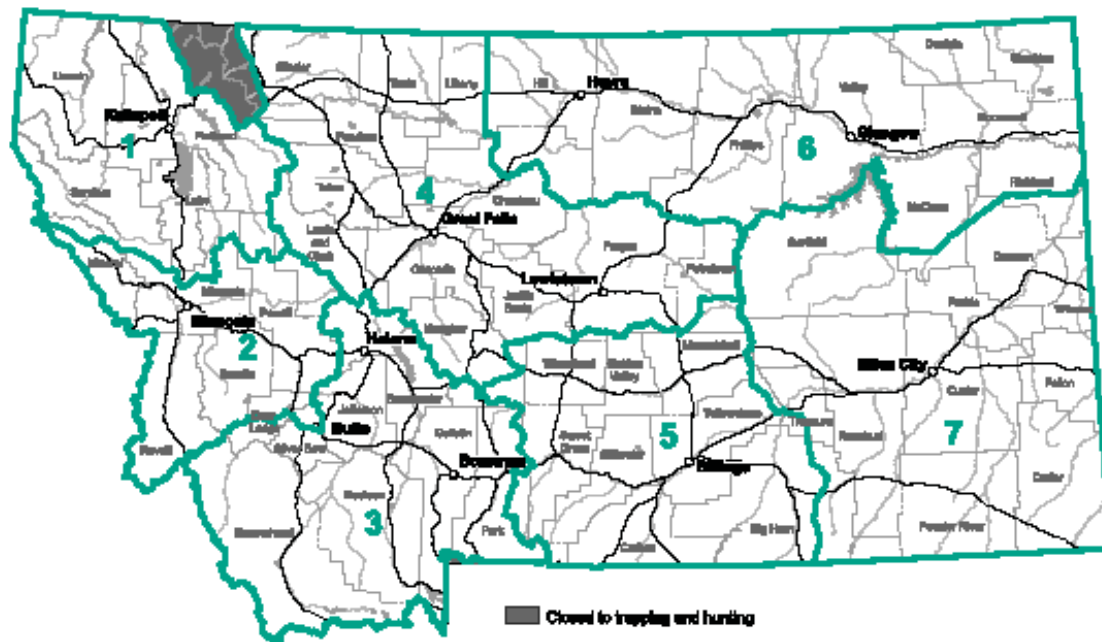
Use weaker / smaller traps that would still hold coyotes, but probably not wolves. Trapping systems for coyotes can be improved to reduce the chance of losing traps or injuring wolves unnecessarily. Double staking or cross pinning stakes (metal, 18-24 inches long) can prevent trap loss. Wolves are strong enough to pull out disposable or shorter stakes, especially in soft substrate. Staked traps should have about 18" or less of chain and a stout swivel system. Reinforce links by welding if necessary.

When using a drag system, use heavy drags and chains with a stout swivel. Make sure all links are welded and swivels are strong. The drag system should be heavy enough to hold a 100+ pound animal and prevent a wolf from walking off with the trap. Traps anchored to a drag can have up to 7 feet of chain. Reinforce links by welding if necessary.

Required breakaway snares may release a neck-snared wolf under some circumstances. Neck snares must be well anchored and should have a long cable. Be mindful of the where and how the snare is placed relative to obstacles such as logs. Obstacles could entangle an animal caught incidentally, preventing the breakaway from working properly.



## Trapping District Boundaries



## Trapping District Legal Descriptions

### District 1 –

Those portions of Flathead, Lake, Lincoln, Lewis and Clark, Missoula, Powell and Sanders counties within the following described boundary: Beginning at a point where the Continental Divide intersects with the Glacier National Park boundary at Marias Pass, then westerly and northerly along the Glacier National Park boundary to the Canadian line, then westerly along said line to the Montana-Idaho border, then southerly along said border to its junction with the Sanders-Mineral County line, then easterly along said county line to Trail 404 near Combust Peak, then east on Trail 404 to Miller Creek Loop Road, then along Miller Creek and Forest Road 7593 to Patrick's Knob, then southerly on Trail 1714 to Montana Route 135, then easterly along said route to Trail 242, then southerly along said trail to Clark Fork-Ninemile Divide, then easterly along said divide and Sanders County line to the Flathead Indian Reservation, then northerly and easterly and then southerly along said reservation to the Swan-Clearwater Divide, then east and north along said divide to the Blackfoot-Flathead Divide at Wolverine Peak, then south, east and north along said divide to the Continental Divide at Triple Divide Mountain, then northerly along said divide to the Glacier National Park boundary at Marias Pass, the point of beginning.

### District 2 –

Those portions of Deer Lodge, Granite, Lewis and Clark, Mineral, Missoula, Powell, Ravalli and Silver Bow Counties lying within the following described boundary: Beginning at Lookout Pass on the Montana-Idaho border, then in an easterly direction along the Mineral County-Sanders County line to U.S. Forest Service Trail 404 near Combust Peak, then east on said trail to Miller Creek Loop Forest Service Road, then east along said road to its junction with U.S. Forest Service Trail 415, then south and east on said trail to its junction with U.S. Forest Service Trail 1714, then south on said trail to the Clark Fork River at the Cascade Campground, then south along Forest Service Trail 242 to the Ninemile-Seigel Creek Divide, then easterly along said divide to the Flathead Indian Reservation, then southeasterly and northeasterly along said reservation boundary to the Swan-Clearwater Divide, then easterly and northerly along said divide to the Blackfoot-Flathead Divide, then southerly, easterly and northerly along said divide to the Continental Divide at Triple Divide Mountain, then southeasterly along said divide to Interstate 15, then in a southerly direction along said interstate to its junction with Interstate 90 at Butte, then west and north

along said Interstate to its junction with State Route 1, northwesterly along said highway to State Route 274 (Mill Creek Road), then southerly along said route to the Continental Divide, then southwesterly along said divide to the Montana-Idaho border, then westerly and northerly along said border to Lookout Pass, the point of beginning.

### District 3 –

Those portions of Beaverhead, Broadwater, Deer Lodge, Gallatin, Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, Madison, Meagher, Park and Silver Bow Counties lying within the following described boundary: Beginning at Mt. Tiny on the Continental Divide, then southwesterly along said divide to the Montana-Idaho border, then southerly and easterly along said border to the Yellowstone National Park boundary, then northerly and easterly along said boundary to the Stillwater-Yellowstone River Divide, then northwesterly along said divide to Columbine Pass and the Boulder River-Yellowstone River divide, then westerly and northerly along said divide to Elephant Head Mountain, then north down Mission Creek to the Yellowstone River, then east down the south bank of said river to the mouth of Duck Creek, then northwesterly along the west bank of said creek to the West Fork of Duck Creek then northwesterly along the west bank of said creek to the Shields-Yellowstone River Divide (Crazy Mountain Divide), then northerly and westerly along said divide to the Shields-Musselshell River Divide, then westerly along said divide to the Smith-Shields River Divide and the head of the Middle Fork of Sixteen Mile Creek, then westerly down the south bank of said creek to Sixteen Mile Creek, then North easterly along the south bank of said creek to US Highway 89, then northwesterly along said highway to its intersection with US Highway 12, then westerly along said highway to the Broadwater-Meagher county line, then northwesterly along said line and subsequently continuing northwesterly along the Meagher-Lewis and Clark county line to the Beaver Creek Elk Creek Divide, then westerly along said divide to the posted Bearfoot WMA boundary fence near Hump's cabin, then southwesterly along the Willow Creek-Elkhorn Creek Divide, then southwesterly along said divide to Willow Mountain, then along the Meriwether Canyon-Willow Creek divide, then southwesterly down the Meriwether Canyon-Mann Gulch Divide to the mouth of Meriwether Canyon on the east side of the Missouri River, then northerly up Hotter Lake and the east shore of the Missouri River to Interstate 15, then southerly along said Interstate to the junction with US Highway 287, then south on said

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highway to the bridge over Lyons Creek, then up said creek and the North Fork of Lyons Creek to the Continental Divide, then southeasterly along said divide to Interstate 15, then in a southerly direction along said Interstate to its junction with Interstate 90 at Butte, then westerly and northerly along said Interstate to its junction with State Route 1, then northwesterly along said highway to State Route 274 (Mill Creek Road), then southerly along said road to the Continental Divide, then southwesterly along said divide to Mt. Tiny, the point of beginning.

**Upper Madison Beaver Management Area** – Those portions of Gallatin and Madison counties that include all of the Madison River drainage upstream from the Earthquake Lake Dam described as follows: Beginning at the outlet of Earthquake Lake Dam on the Madison River, then northerly to U. S. Highway 287, then northeasterly to the intersection of Rock Creek, then up said creek to the Beaverhead-Gallatin National Forest boundary, then northerly on said boundary to the Madison River-Gallatin River divide, then easterly along said divide to the western boundary of Yellowstone National Park, then south along said boundary to the Montana-Idaho state line, then westerly and northerly along this boundary to the Madison River, then easterly along said river to the outlet of Earthquake Lake Dam, the point of beginning.

#### District 4 –

Those portions of Cascade, Chouteau, Fergus, Glacier, Hill, Judith Basin, Lewis and Clark, Liberty, Meagher, Petroleum, Pondera, Teton and Toole counties lying within the following described boundary: Beginning at a point where the eastern boundary of Glacier National Park intersects the United States-Canada Boundary, then east along said boundary to the Liberty-Hill County line, then south on said line to the Marias River, then southerly along the east bank of said river to the Missouri River, then easterly along the south bank of said river to the Fort Peck Reservoir, then easterly and southerly along the south edge of said reservoir to the Musselshell River, then southerly along the west bank of said river to State Route 200, then west along said route to Winnett, then southwesterly on the Winnett to Roundup Road (FAS 244) to its junction with US Highway 87, then north on said highway approximately 4 miles to Flat Willow Creek, then westerly up said creek to the South Fork of Flat Willow Creek, then westerly up said creek to the Red Hill Road, then south along said road to the Snowy Mountain Divide, then westerly along said divide to the head of Meadow Creek, then westerly down said creek to US Highway 191, then south on said highway to the Wheatland-Judith Basin county line, then westerly on said line and subsequently continuing westerly along the Meagher-Judith Basin County line to its junction with the Spring Creek-Whitetail Creek Road (Forest Service Road #274), then south on this road to US Highway 12, then southeasterly on said highway to its junction with Route 294, then southwesterly on said route to its junction with US Highway 89, then northwesterly on said highway to its intersection with US Highway 12, then southwesterly on said highway to the Broadwater-Meagher county line, then north along said line and Meagher-Lewis and Clark county line to the Beaver Creek-Elk Creek divide, then westerly along said divide to the posted Beartooth WMA boundary fence near Hump Cabin, then southwesterly along the Willow Creek-Elkhorn Creek bank of said river to the Melstone-Custer Road bridge, then south Porcupine Creek divide, then southwesterly along said divide to Willow Mountain, then along the Meriwether Canyon-Willow Creek divide, then southwesterly down the Meriwether Canyon-Mann Gulch divide to the mouth of Meriwether Canyon on the east side of the Missouri River, then northerly up Hotter Lake and the east shore of the Missouri River to Interstate 15, then southerly along said Interstate to the junction with US Highway 287, then south on said highway to the bridge over Lyons Creek, then up said creek and the North Fork of Lyons Creek to the Continental Divide, then northerly along said divide to the Glacier National Park boundary, then easterly and northerly along said boundary to the United States-Canada boundary, the point of beginning.

#### District 5 –

Those portions of Big Horn, Carbon, Fergus, Golden Valley, Meagher, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Treasure, Wheatland and Yellowstone counties lying within the following described boundaries: Beginning at Wolverine Peak where the Stillwater-Yellowstone River Divide meets with the Yellowstone National Park boundary, then northwesterly along said divide to Columbine Pass and the Boulder River-Yellowstone River Divide, then westerly and northerly along said divide to Elephant Head Mountain, then north down Mission Creek to the Yellowstone River, then east down the south bank of said river to the mouth of Duck Creek, then northwesterly along the west bank of said creek to the West Fork of Duck Creek, then northwesterly along the west bank of said creek to the Shields-Yellowstone River Divide (Crazy Mountain Divide), then northerly and westerly along said divide to the Shields-Musselshell River Divide, then westerly along said divide to the Smith-Shields River Divide and the head of the Middle Fork of Sixteen Mile Creek, then westerly down

the south bank of said creek to Sixteen Mile Creek, then northwesterly along the south bank of said creek to US Highway 89, then north on said highway to its junction with Route 294, then northeasterly on said route to its junction with US Highway 12, then northwesterly on said highway to its junction with the Spring Creek-Whitetail Creek Road (Forest Service Road #274), then north on said road to the Meagher-Judith Basin county line, then easterly along said line and subsequently continuing easterly along the Wheatland-Judith Basin county line to its junction with US Highway 191, then northerly on said highway to its intersection with Meadow Creek near Garfield, then northeasterly along said creek to the Snowy Mountain Divide, then easterly along said divide to its intersection with the Red Hill Road, then north along said road to South Fork Flat Willow Creek, then easterly along said creek to Flat Willow Creek, then easterly along said creek to US Highway 87, then southerly along said highway to Route 244, then northerly along said route to Winnett, then east along US Highway 200 to the Musselshell River, then south down the east bank of the Musselshell River to the Melstone-Custer Road bridge, then south along the Melstone-Custer Road to Interstate 94 near Custer, then east along said Interstate to State Route 47, then south along said route to Interstate 90 at Hardin, then south along said Interstate to the Montana-Wyoming state line, then westerly along said line to the Yellowstone National Park Boundary, then northerly and westerly along said boundary to the Stillwater-Yellowstone River divide at Wolverine Peak, the point of beginning.

#### District 6 –

Those portions of Blaine, Chouteau, Daniels, Garfield, Hill, McCone, Phillips, Richland, Roosevelt, Sheridan and Valley counties lying within the following described boundary: Beginning at a point where State Route 233 joins the Canadian Line (near the port of Willow Creek), then west along said border to the Hill-Liberty county line, then south along said line to the Marias River, then southerly along the east bank of said river to the Missouri River, then easterly along the south bank of said river to the Fort Peck Powerhouse, then southerly along the east shore of Fort Peck Reservoir to Big Dry Creek, then south along said creek to State Route 200, then east and northeast along said route to the North Dakota border, then north along said border to the Canadian border, then west along said border to State Route 233, the point of beginning.

#### District 7 –

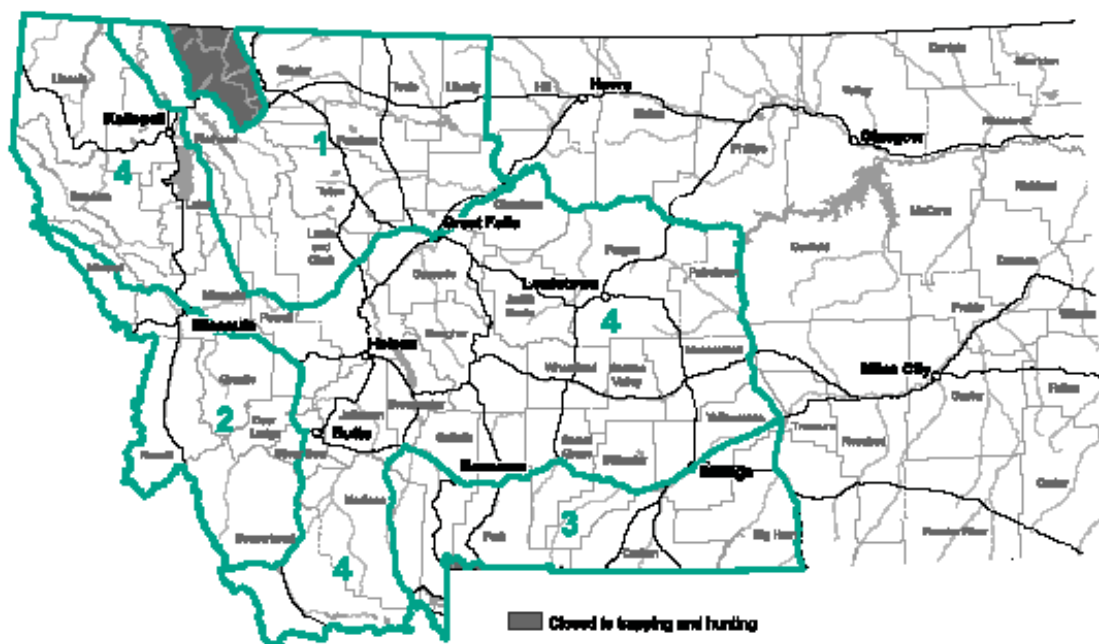
Those portions of Bighorn, Carter, Custer, Dawson, Fallon, Garfield, McCone, Musselshell, Powder River, Prairie, Richland, Rosebud, Treasure, Yellowstone and Wibaux Counties lying within the following described boundary: Beginning at the junction of State Route 47 and Interstate 94, then east along said Interstate to the intersection with the Melstone-Custer Road near Custer, then north along said road to Melstone, then east along U. S. Highway 12 to the Musselshell River bridge, then north down the west bank of the Musselshell River to the Missouri River, then east and northeast down said river to the Fort Peck Powerhouse, then southerly along the east shore of Fort Peck Reservoir to Big Dry Creek, then south up said creek to Little Dry Creek, then east along State Route 200 to the Montana-North Dakota state line, then south to the Montana-Wyoming state line, then west along said state line to Interstate 90, then north along said Interstate to state route 47, then north along said state route to Interstate 94, the point of beginning.

#### Portions of Trapping Districts 1 and 2 for Special Bobcat, Marten, Fisher and Wolverine Regulations –

Those portions of Trapping Districts 1 and 2 within the following described boundary: From the intersection of US HWY 2 with the Montana-Idaho state line then south and east along US HWY 2 to its intersection with US HWY 93 at Kalispell then southerly along US HWY 93 to its intersection with Interstate 90 then southeasterly along Interstate 90 to its intersection with US HWY 12 at Garrison then easterly along US HWY 12 to its intersection with the Continental Divide at McDonald Pass then northerly along the Continental Divide to its intersection with the Glacier National Park boundary at Marias Pass then westerly and northerly along the Glacier National Park boundary to the US-Canada border then west along said border to its intersection with the Montana-Idaho state line then south along said line to its intersection with US HWY 2 the point of beginning.



## Wolverine Management Units



### Wolverine Management Unit Legal Descriptions

**WMU 1 (Northern Core)** – Beginning at the Intersection of Highway 93 and the US/Canada border at Roosville; then south along said highway to Highway 40; then east along said highway to Highway 2 at Columbia Falls; then south along said highway to Highway 35; then south along said highway to Highway 83; then south along said highway to Highway 200; then east along said highway to the Missouri River at Great Falls; then east down said river to the Marias River; then north up said river to the Hill-Liberty County line; then north along said line to the US/Canada border; then west along said border to the Glacier NP boundary; then southwesterly and northwesterly along said boundary back to the US/Canada border; then west to along said border to Highway 93 at Roosville, the point of beginning.

**WMU 2 (Central Core)** – Beginning at the Intersection of Interstate 90 and the MT/Idaho border at Lookout Pass; then southeasterly on said Interstate to Interstate 15 at Rocker; then south along said Interstate to Highway 324 at Clark Canyon Reservoir; then west on said highway to Lemhi Pass Road; then west along said road to the MT/Idaho border at Lemhi Pass; then north along said border to Interstate 90 at Lookout Pass the, point of beginning.

**WMU 3 (Southern Core)** – Beginning at the Intersection of Highway 87 and the MT/Idaho border at Raynold's Pass; then north on said highway to Highway 287; then north on said highway to Interstate 90; then east on said Interstate to Interstate 94; then east on said Interstate to Custer; then south on Highway 47 to Interstate 90; then south on said Interstate to the MT/Wyo border; then west along said border to Yellowstone National Park boundary; then westerly and southerly along said boundary to the MT/Idaho border; then northwest along said border to Raynold's Pass, the point of beginning.

**WMU 4 (Central Insular Mountains)** – Beginning at Roosville on the US/Canadian border; then west on said border to MT/Idaho border; then south along said border to Interstate 90 at Lookout Pass; then east along said Interstate to Interstate 15 at Rocker; then southerly along said Interstate to HWY 324 at Clark Canyon Reservoir; then west on said highway to Lemhi Pass Road; then west along said road to Lemhi Pass on the MT/Idaho border; then south and east along said border to HWY 87 at Raynold's Pass; then north along said highway to HWY 287; then north along said highway to Interstate 90; then east along said Interstate to Interstate 94; then east along said Interstate to HWY 310 at Custer; then north on said highway to Meistone and HWY 500; then north on said highway to Musselshell River at Mosby; then north on said river to Ft Peck/Missouri River; then west on said river to Great Falls and HWY 200; then west on said highway to its intersection with HWY 83; then north along said highway to HWY 35; then north on said highway to HWY 2; then north to Columbia Falls and HWY 40; then west on said highway to HWY 93; then north along said highway to Roosville, the point of beginning.

## Who To Contact

Bobcat, Otter, Fisher and Wolverine 24-hour Harvest Reporting Number..... 1-877-FWP-WILD (397-9453)

Bobcat, Otter, Fisher and Wolverine Quota Status (24 hours/day - 7 days/week)..... 1-800-711-8727  
Mountain Lion Quota Status (24 hours/day - 7 days/week)..... 1-800-385-7826

### Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks State Headquarters

1420 East 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, PO Box 200701  
Helena, MT 59620-0701  
406-444-2535 – fwp@state.mt.us

Hunter Education..... 406-444-3188  
Wildlife Division..... 406-444-2612  
Enforcement Division..... 406-444-2452  
Parks Division (Montana State Parks)..... 406-444-3750  
Telephone Device for the Deaf..... 406-444-1200

### Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Regional Headquarters

#### REGION 1

490 N Meridian Road  
Kalispell, MT 59901..... 406-752-5501

#### REGION 2

3201 Spurgin Road  
Missoula, MT 59804..... 406-542-5500

#### REGION 3

1400 South 19<sup>th</sup>  
Bozeman, MT 59715..... 406-994-4042

#### REGION 4

4800 Giant Springs Road  
Great Falls, MT 59405..... 406-454-5840

#### REGION 5

2300 Lake Elmo Drive  
Billings, MT 59105..... 406-247-2940

#### REGION 6

54078 US Hwy 2 W  
Glasgow, MT 59230..... 406-228-3700

#### REGION 7

Industrial Site West, PO Box 1630  
Miles City, MT 59301..... 406-234-0900

### Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Area Resource Offices

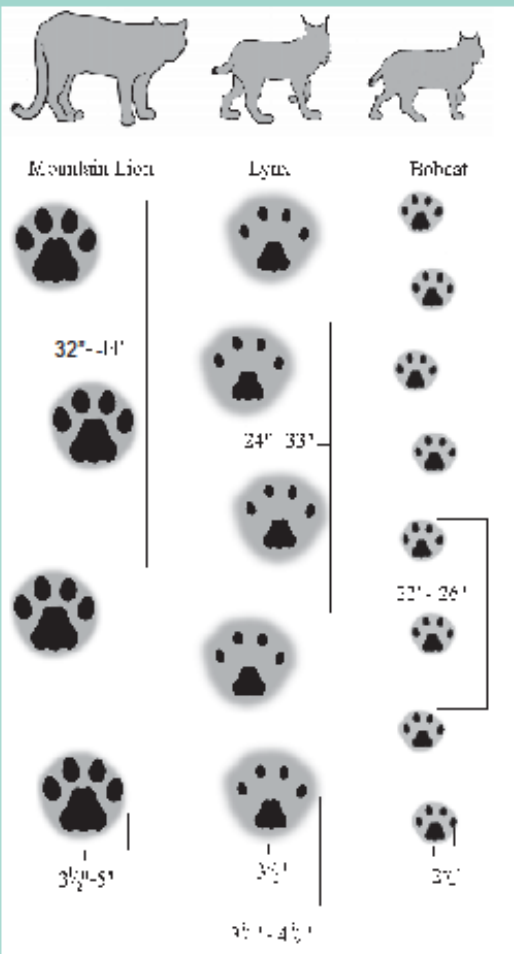
Butte  
1820 Meadowlark Lane  
Butte, MT 59701..... 406-494-1953  
Havre  
2165 Hwy 2 East  
Havre, MT 59501..... 406-265-6177  
Helena  
930 Custer Avenue West  
Helena, MT 59602..... 406-495-3260  
Lewistown  
2358 Airport Road, PO Box 938,  
Lewistown, MT 59457..... 406-538-4658



**Montana Fish,  
Wildlife & Parks**

## Cat Identification

Field identification characteristics of mountain lion, lynx, and bobcat—physical markings and tracks in the snow (Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 1999).



- Note differences in tail length of lion and black markings on tip of lynx and bobcat tail.
- Lynx ear tufts are longer than bobcat ear tufts.
- Lion and lynx foot sizes are similar; bobcat is much smaller.
- Tracks are shown with shaded area representing impression of hair in the snow.
- Note track size and stride length differences between species.



B. Annual Furbearer Program Spring Newsletter.



# ***Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks***

## **STATE FURBEARER PROGRAM NEWSLETTER**

**Spring 2008**

**Wildlife Division P.O. Box 200701 Helena MT 59620-0701**

This newsletter is provided through Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) state furbearer program to inform trappers, hunters, the public, and department personnel about current furbearer management activities and issues in the state of Montana – Brian Giddings, State Furbearer Coordinator.

### **2008& 2009 TRAPPING REGULATIONS**

Trapping regulations and furbearer seasons for the 2008-09 and 2009-10 seasons and furbearer quotas for the 2008-09 season will be tentatively adopted by the FWP Commission at their June 12, 2008 meeting in Helena. Under a biennial, or two-year, season setting schedule trapping regulations and furbearer seasons are now up for review at the June meeting which provides the opportunity to implement changes based on FWP recommendations and Commission action. Public comment and discussion on regulation changes is important during this meeting so trappers and other interested individuals are encouraged to attend. Information on furbearer population trends, species harvest data, and trapper effort is evaluated in FWP recommendations, as well as consideration of public comments regarding regulation changes. To receive copies of the tentative regulations adopted on June 12 by the Commission, contact the FWP Wildlife Division or go to the FWP website. The Commission will take final action on trapping regulations and furbearer seasons at its August 5 meeting in Helena, which will follow a 30-day public comment

period on the tentative regulations. Comments should be sent to FWP Commission, Wildlife Division, P.O. Box 200701, Helena MT 59620-0701 or through the FWP website at [www.fwp.mt.gov](http://www.fwp.mt.gov).

### **FEDERAL DECISION ON WOLVERINE**

On September 29, 2006, as a result of a complaint filed by Defenders of Wildlife and others alleging that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) used the wrong standards when it denied a 2003 wolverine listing petition, the U.S. District Court in Montana ruled that the USFWS 90-day petition finding was in error and ordered the USFWS to make a new 12-month finding for the wolverine.

On March 11, 2008 the USFWS determined that protecting the population of wolverine in the contiguous United States as a threatened or endangered species under the ESA is not warranted. Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) agrees with this federal decision because Montana provides extensive wolverine habitat and supports the largest wolverine population in the lower 48 states. The USFWS determined that wolverine in Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming are not a distinct population segment from continuous populations in Canada and that they do not constitute a significant portion of the wolverine range, which includes Canada and Alaska. The USFWS estimated population numbers for western Canada at 15,000 to almost 19,000 individuals and the

Rocky Mountain states of Montana, Idaho and Wyoming at approximately 500 animals. FWP considers the majority of this population to be in Montana.

#### LYNX CRITICAL HABITAT PROPOSED

On February 28, 2008 the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) announced a proposal to revise the critical lynx habitat designation in Montana from the current Glacier National Park to also include northwestern Montana and the Greater Yellowstone Area. The Northern Rocky Mountains unit would include approximately 11,000 mi<sup>2</sup> in Flathead, Glacier, Granite, Lake, Lewis & Clark, Lincoln, Missoula, Pondera, Powell, and Teton counties. The Greater Yellowstone Area unit would include almost 3,000 mi<sup>2</sup> in Gallatin, Park, Sweetgrass, Stillwater, and Carbon counties. The proposed rule and maps of the two units in Montana are available on the USFWS website at <http://mountainprairie.fws.gov/species/mammals/lynx/>. Although the comment period deadline was April 28, 2008 the USFWS often receives extensions so check their website to see if this occurred.

#### TRAPPER EDUCATION LEGISLATION

During the 2007 legislative session FWP submitted a bill to amend the education and safety course statute to include trapper education. Both the Montana Trappers Association (MTA) and FWP worked together in support of this legislation that would have required first time general trapper license buyers to complete a trapper education and safety course. Unfortunately the bill died. However, FWP will request that this same legislation be introduced again during the 2009 legislative session. This legislation is an important step to demonstrate that licensed trappers have proper training and are responsible trappers and that mandatory trapper education may preclude additional regulation. Trapper support for this bill during the 2009 legislature is critical to its passage.

#### WOLF DELISTING IN MONTANA

On March 28, 2008 wolves were officially delisted, or removed from the federal ESA in Montana and the Northern Rockies and are now under FWP management authority. The US Fish & Wildlife Service had previously approved Montana's wolf management plan, which includes hunting and trapping as methods to manage wolf numbers and distribution, as long as there are at least 15 breeding pairs in the state. The most recent minimum Montana wolf population estimate was 422 wolves in 73 verified packs, of which 39 qualified as a breeding pair. This is about a 34% increase from the 2006 population estimate. Despite the increase during 2007, 102 wolf mortalities were documented, of which 73 were livestock related. The remaining mortalities were 7 illegal kills, 6 vehicle or train strikes, 1 legal harvest in Canada, 7 incidental and agency-related, 3 natural deaths, 1 incidental snaring, and 4 unknown. The FWP Commission has set a hunting-only season under a quota system beginning this September, unless litigation precludes the state's first public hunt.

#### AVERAGE PELT PRICE VALUES

Average pelt prices are from the March 2008 wild fur sale by North American Fur Auctions.

Species	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Beaver	20.50	23.48	24.80
Otter	100.00	80.00	40.91
Muskrat	3.50	3.20	3.23
Mink	15.00	12.88	15.22
Marten	45.50	61.57	77.29
Fisher	35.00	74.31	87.51
Wolverine	300.00	217.85	280.35
Bobcat	345.00	257.33	449.45
Coyote	38.50	43.36	37.90
Red Fox	25.00	20.84	22.48
Raccoon	11.50	22.05	33.22
Weasel	3.00	4.96	5.69
Skunk	6.50	4.04	5.27
Badger	27.50	27.57	42.60

C. Harvest Registration Form.



# Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks



## FURBEARER HARVEST REGISTRATION

### FUR HARVESTER:

Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ ALS No: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address (FedEx Delivery): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**SPECIES HARVESTED:** (Check/register only SAME species per form)

Bobcat \_\_\_\_\_ Otter \_\_\_\_\_ Marten \_\_\_\_\_ Fisher \_\_\_\_\_ Wolverine \_\_\_\_\_ Lynx (Fur Farm) \_\_\_\_\_

### HARVEST INFORMATION:

Date(s) Taken	Trap Dist. (1-7)	County	Location	T	R	Sec	Pelt Tag # (for marten see below)	Sex
<b>Type:</b> Fur Harvest _____ Incidental Take _____ Illegal Harvest _____ Reservation _____ Non-Harvest _____ Fur Farm _____ Unknown _____								
<b>Method:</b> Foothold _____ Snare _____ Conibear _____ Freeshot _____ Hounds _____ Livetraps _____ Other _____ <b>Ref #:</b> _____								
<b>Specimen Collection:</b> Carcass _____ Skull _____ (ONLY ONE skull per bag) Return skull (delivery charge for bobcat) Yes _____ No _____								
<b>Marten:</b> Male Pelt Tag #(s): _____ (up to 10)								
Female Pelt Tag #(s): _____ (up to 10)								

Date(s) Taken	Trap Dist. (1-7)	County	Location	T	R	Sec	Pelt Tag # (for marten see below)	Sex
<b>Type:</b> Fur Harvest _____ Incidental Take _____ Illegal Harvest _____ Reservation _____ Non-Harvest _____ Fur Farm _____ Unknown _____								
<b>Method:</b> Foothold _____ Snare _____ Conibear _____ Freeshot _____ Hounds _____ Livetraps _____ Other _____ <b>Ref #:</b> _____								
<b>Specimen Collection:</b> Carcass _____ Skull _____ (ONLY ONE skull per bag) Return skull (delivery charge for bobcat) Yes _____ No _____								
<b>Marten:</b> Male Pelt Tag #(s): _____ (up to 10)								
Female Pelt Tag #(s): _____ (up to 10)								

Date(s) Taken	Trap Dist. (1-7)	County	Location	T	R	Sec	Pelt Tag # (for marten see below)	Sex
<b>Type:</b> Fur Harvest _____ Incidental Take _____ Illegal Harvest _____ Reservation _____ Non-Harvest _____ Fur Farm _____ Unknown _____								
<b>Method:</b> Foothold _____ Snare _____ Conibear _____ Freeshot _____ Hounds _____ Livetraps _____ Other _____ <b>Ref #:</b> _____								
<b>Specimen Collection:</b> Carcass _____ Skull _____ (ONLY ONE skull per bag) Return skull (delivery charge for bobcat) Yes _____ No _____								
<b>Marten:</b> Male Pelt Tag #(s): _____ (up to 10)								
Female Pelt Tag #(s): _____ (up to 10)								

Skulls of **bobcat** and carcasses of **otter**, **fisher** and **wolverine** must be collected at the time of pelt tagging. Use corresponding portion of second page of form to fill out and place in sleeve of specimen collection bag. Only **ONE** skull per bag. Forward all specimens to a regional office or FWP wildlife lab in Bozeman. **NOTE: Bobcat skulls will only be returned if trapper agrees to pay shipping costs (approx. \$4 per skull, depending on package weight) at the time of FedEx delivery.**

*I swear and affirm that the furbearer(s) listed were taken pursuant to Department rule which permits the acquisition of title to the furbearer by me described on this application, and the information is true and correct. MCA 87-2-106 (6).*

Fur Harvester's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

85  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

FWP Employee (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

NEEDS KEYING INTO MRRE PROGRAM IMMEDIATELY

D. Trapper Harvest Survey Questionnaire.

# FURBEARER HARVEST SURVEY LICENSE YEAR 2007



**Montana Fish,  
Wildlife & Parks**

«First\_Name» «Last\_Name» «Suffix»

«Address»

«City», «State» «Zip\_Code»-«ZIP4»

| «ZIP\_CODE»«ZIP4»«DPBC»|

Thank you for your cooperation with this Furbearer Harvest Survey.

Although you may have already provided information on several furbearers that have reporting, pelt tagging and registration requirements, you are being requested to provide information on your harvest effort for all furbearer, predatory, and non-game species that are trapped and hunted in Montana. This is a statewide survey of ALL furbearer license holder activities *including unsuccessful* furbearer harvesters. This survey includes ALL your activities (trapping and snaring, hunting, and the use of hounds) related to the species listed on the back of this questionnaire.

The information you provide is vital to a successful furbearer management program. Harvest data provides the information necessary to support the continuation of your harvest activities as a sound wildlife management strategy and assists FWP in maintaining the flexibility to manage your furbearer resources in Montana. Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire.

**EVEN IF YOU DID NOT TRAP, SNARE OR HUNT, OR USE HOUNDS FOR FURBEARERS, PLEASE ANSWER QUESTION NO. 1 AND RETURN THIS SURVEY WITHIN THREE (3) WEEKS. THANK YOU.**

Supplemental Question: Has the density of bobcats in your Trapping District changed over the last year?

Trapping District: \_\_\_\_\_ or County: \_\_\_\_\_

Bobcat Density (check one): Declined: \_\_\_\_\_ Stable: \_\_\_\_\_ Increased: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Did you trap, snare, hunt, or use hounds during the 2007-2008 furbearer season? NO ☐ YES ☐

***PLEASE REFER TO THE BACK OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE TO REPORT YOUR HARVEST ACTIVITIES.***

**QUESTION 2 REFERS TO YOUR TRAPPING AND SNARING ACTIVITIES.**

**QUESTION 3 REFERS ONLY TO YOUR HUNTING ACTIVITIES.**

**QUESTION 4 REFERS ONLY TO THE USE OF HOUNDS FOR YOUR HUNTING ACTIVITIES**

2. Please report your TRAPPING AND SNARING activities by county in the appropriate boxes below even if you did not harvest any animals (beaver, otter, muskrat, mink, marten, fisher, wolverine, bobcat, coyote, fox, weasel, skunk, raccoon, badger). If your activities occurred in more than one county, list the information for each county separately.

County Name	Species	Number of Traps and Snares	Number of Days Set	Number Harvested
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

\*If more than 5 species were trapped/snared in a county, continue listing species in the next county area and repeat the county name.

3. Please report your furbeaver and predator **HUNTING** activity WITHOUT HOUNDS (bobcat, wolverine, coyote, fox, raccoon, badger, skunk).

County Name	Species Hunted	Days Hunted	Number Harvested
1.			
2.			
3.			

4. Please report your furbeaver **HUNTING** activity WITH HOUNDS (bobcat, raccoon). (Do not list in county 1100; ~~foxes are not furbeavers~~).

County Name	Species Hunted	Days Hunted	Number Harvested
1.			
2.			
3.			

Harvested by 06/19/2021 (revised 10/2021) sheet



E. Accidentally Trapped Dog Report Form.



# Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

## ACCIDENTALLY TRAPPED DOG REPORT

Reporting **FUR HARVESTER** \_\_\_ or **DOG OWNER** \_\_\_ (Check One):

Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ ALS No: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

### Report Information:

Region: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_ General Location/Landmark: \_\_\_\_\_

Public Land: USFS \_\_\_ BLM \_\_\_ DNRC \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_ or Private: Corporate \_\_\_ Individual \_\_\_ Farm/Ranch \_\_\_

Trap Type: Foothold \_\_\_ Snare \_\_\_ Conibear \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_ Identification on Trap (Trap Tag): Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Target Species (Complete from Fur Harvester Only): \_\_\_\_\_

Condition of Dog: Not Injured \_\_\_ Foot Damage \_\_\_ Killed \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_

Dog Running At Large or Accompanied by Owner: At Large \_\_\_ With Owner \_\_\_

If at Large, Identification on Dog: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Dog Owner Notified: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Was Dog Out of Site or Verbal Command of Owner: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Dog Owner Activity: Bird Hunting \_\_\_ Hiking \_\_\_ X-Country Skiing \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_

### Site Visit Information:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Investigating Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe Site Location Circumstances: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Legal Trap Set: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ If Illegal, Reason Why: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Was Citation Issued for Either Party: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Type of Citation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
FWP Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
FWP Employee (Print)

Please send completed form to Brian Giddings, Furbearer Coordinator, P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620

F. Furbearer Snow Track Survey Form.

